■ **INQUIRER IN-DEPTH**

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Ngayong alas-11 ng gabi, sa ABC

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RP, US soldiers mark Corregidor liberation 60 years ago

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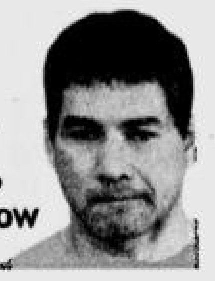
Young guns open up as Southwoods leads PAL Interclub by 2

■ **News / A2**

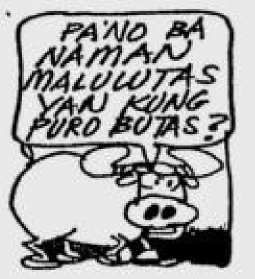
Weathermen warn northern Luzon provinces of El Niño

■ **Metro / A19**

Roldan lost heavily in Las Vegas casino, DOJ documents show



Did gov't agents recycle evidence vs bombers?


PA'NO BA NAMAN MALULUTAS YAN KUNG PURO BUTAS?

By Alcuin Papa

TO THINK President Macapagal-Arroyo has congratulated the military and police for their "string of successes" in the antiterror campaign.

DID GOV'T/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Thursday, March 3, 2005 ★★ 46 pages / 4 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 85 P18
website: www.inq7.net

Hong Kong chief executive expected to quit next week

HONG KONG—Hong Kong's unpopular leader plans to resign—possibly as soon as next week—because of ill health, ending a rocky eight years in office that ignited massive protests for greater democracy in the former British colony, according to local media.

Most of the Chinese-ruled territory's newspapers filled their front pages with bold head-

HONG KONG/ A18

Pork behind budget OK

Villar's no bicam idea irks House leadership

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

IT ALL boiled down to the graft-ridden pork barrel.

The Senate adopted on Tuesday night the 2005 budget that the House of Representatives had approved to foil the plan of members of the House to restore their pork barrel from P40 million to P70 million during a bicameral conference committee, several senators said yesterday.

A bicameral conference is convened only to reconcile the conflicting provisions in the House and Senate versions of a bill.

The Senate approval of the P907.56-billion budget for this year came a day after President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed displeasure over the failure of Congress to pass the budget.

Under the approved budget, each senator is allotted P120 million in pork barrel, down from P200 million, and each member of the House, P40 million, down from P70 million. The reduction of the pork barrel allocations was contained in the original budget proposed by Ms Arroyo to Congress.

Pork barrel, a notorious source of kickbacks, is money taken from the national budget that funds projects identified by legislators.

Rolando Andaya Jr., chair of the House appropriations committee, said it was the Senate that had wanted the full amount of its Priority Development Assistance Fund (PDAF), commonly known as pork barrel, retained in the 2005 national budget.

"It's like the pot calling the kettle black," said Andaya, adding, "*Sino ba ang nahuli na kumakain sa kusina* (Who was caught with his hand inside the cookie jar)?"

Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. took the floor to denounce the Senate, which he said was "caught red-handed stealing from the pork barrel" when it allegedly tried to increase by P1.3 billion its pork barrel.

"Just because they were caught, and caught by one of their own members, the only way they can divert attention from their own shame is to slap us with their dirt that should properly cling to their faces," said Locsin, eliciting applause from members of the House.

It was Sen. Panfilo Lacson who disclosed Monday that his colleagues had padded their pork barrel by P1.3 billion.

But Lacson yesterday defended the Senate approval of the bud-

PORK/ A8

VAL HANDUMON

"THE ROCK" marks the 60th year of its liberation from Japanese forces by Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Allied Commander in the Pacific, in World War II. Against a backdrop of the ruins of American garrisons, President Arroyo memorializes the historic moment with US envoy, Richard Ricciardonne (left) and Sen. Richard Gordon. Behind is Tourism Secretary Ace Durano. *(Story on Page A2)*

VAL HANDUMON

ELIAS MANLAPAS, 88 weighed down by his war medals and the heavy heart of the routinely forgotten WW II Filipino veteran.

China, RP's new Big Brother, pledges military aid

BEIJING—The Philippines yesterday said that a dispute with China over the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea had been settled and the two sides would work together to exploit the region's oil deposits.

At the same time, China has pledged military assistance for the Philippines for the first time, underscoring its rising influence in a region traditionally dominated by the United States.

China has promised 10 million yuan ($1.2 million) worth of equipment, including engineering hardware, a source with knowledge of the deal said.

In addition to military aid, China—until recently a recipient of foreign aid in the wake of natural disasters—had donated $250,000 to victims of typhoons that hit the Philippines last November and December, a Philippine Embassy newsletter said.

China is also poised to invest in the Philippine mining industry.

"China is the new big brother ... but the United States factor still remains," the source, who requested anonymity, told Reuters.

American troops pulled out of the Philippines, a former US colony, in 1992. But the two countries maintain close ties and US troops recently helped train Filipino forces in battling Muslim guerrillas in Mindanao.

CHINA/ A18

RP flag in SanFo real but not original

DISCOVERY of a Filipino flag at the War Memorial Bldg. in San Francisco started the buzz over the flag which has been missing for over a century.

By Ambeth R. Ocampo
Chair, National Historical Institute

THE BUSHFIRE spread from the Filipino community in San Francisco to Manila leading one and all to ask: Is it, indeed, the original Philippine flag of 1898 made by Marcela Agoncillo?

We now believe it is an authentic period piece but definitely not the original.

It all started in August 2004 when American War Commission Public Relations Director Rudy Asercion rummaged in the Trophy Room of the San Francisco War Memorial Building in search of material to display during the city's commemoration of the 60th anniversary of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's Leyte Landing that signaled the end of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines.

He noticed an old Philippine flag hung by thumbtacks in a display case with sabers and other ancient weapons. Background research led Asercion to connect the flag with Gen. Frederick Funston who captured Emilio Aguinaldo in Palanan in 1901. After serving in the Philippines, Funston settled in San

RP FLAG/ A18

Colonel's death may save lives of soldiers in combat

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

BULLETPROOF helmets and vests for close-quarter battles. A mobile clinic close to the frontline.

These are among the tactical changes that the military is adopting following the death of Lt. Col. Dennis Villanueva, the highest ranking officer killed in recent clashes in Sulu between Army soldiers and followers of jailed Moro leader Nur Misuari, who were backed by Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Since the fighting broke out on Feb. 6, 30 soldiers have died and at least 76 have been wounded, according to the military. It estimated "more or less 70" rebel fatalities, but admitted that no bodies had been found.

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, spokesperson of the Armed Forces, said not all soldiers were equipped with bulletproof vests but those who had the equipment would be ordered to use them all the time in combat.

Most of the military casualties were not wearing bulletproof vests, either because they were not provided them or because they complained the gear was heavy and impeded their movement, Pascual said.

"We need to change the attitude of the soldier and provide him with orientation on the use of this equipment," he said.

Only a "limited number of units" were equipped with vests, and there was peer pressure even within those units to avoid using them, he said.

"For example, if you are an official of the unit and your soldier does not have one, you will be ashamed of wearing it. That's the point," Pascual said. "Your private would regard you as a coward."

COLONEL'S/ A8

216 Filipinos detained in 1st round of Malaysia crackdown

AT LEAST 216 Filipinos are now detained in Malaysia as a result of that country's new nationwide crackdown on undocumented aliens.

The number more than doubled in a matter of hours yesterday.

In an interview over dzBB shortly before noon, Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuque placed the number of arrested Filipinos at around 100. But in a 4 p.m. briefing, he cited updates from the Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur saying 216 had already been caught in the dragnet.

Asuque noted, however, that the reported figure covered only those Filipinos rounded up in Sandakan, part of the eastern Malaysian state of Sabah and an embarkation point for ships and planes bound for Zamboanga in Mindanao.

Asuque said Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo would travel from China to Malaysia today.

He declined to give details on the trip except to say that Romulo would "discuss the issue" concerning Filipino migrants with Malaysian authorities.

Asked how immigration authorities had been treating the arrested Filipinos, Asuque said: "The Malaysian government is observing its obligation to treat them humanely."

Asuque said the Filipinos were being provided legal advice by consular personnel led by Philippine Embassy attaché Nick David.

"We are now giving them legal advice and are ready to help them

216 FILIPINOS/ A18

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/03/03/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Weathermen warn of El Niño

THE WEATHER bureau yesterday warned provinces in Northern Luzon and some areas of the Visayas to prepare for possible drought conditions in the coming months because of the El Niño weather phenomenon.

The Cordillera, Ilocos and Western Visayas regions are the ones likely to experience drought this summer, according to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration.

Pag-Asa director Graciano Yumul said areas that have experienced two consecutive months of "way below normal rainfall" are the ones that have the "potential for drought conditions."

He mentioned in particular the provinces of Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya, Nueva Ecija, Quirino, Aurora, Palawan, Negros Oriental, Siquijor, Biliran, Bukidnon, Davao del Sur, South Cotabato and Sarangani.

"All concerned government agencies are advised to continue implementing appropriate measures to mitigate the potential impact of El Niño on agriculture, water resources, hydropower generation, health and sanitation and other sectors," Pag-Asa said.

In its latest El Niño advisory, Pag-Asa predicted that most areas in the country would experience below-normal rainfall this month. Only the eastern Pangasinan would have above-normal rainfall, it said.

Luzon, considered the country's rice granary, will have temperatures ranging from 21 degrees Celsius to 35 degrees Celsius, warmer than the more mountainous Visayas and Mindanao.

El Niño is a global meteorological phenomenon that develops in the Pacific, most often off Peru, and is associated with extreme climatic variability characterized by devastating rains, winds, drought and other events.

The phenomenon, which develops every few years, involves the warming of the Pacific Ocean by 1 to 2 degrees Celsius, extending from the Peruvian coast to the International Date Line, or one quarter of the earth's surface. The change in sea temperature alters tropical weather patterns and influences short-term climate over the globe through changes in atmospheric circulation.

In the past, El Niño was most felt in December by Peruvian fishermen who observed the strange Christmas weather and named the phenomenon after the Infant Jesus. El Niño is Spanish for "little child." *Blanche S. Rivera*

RP, US soldiers mark Corregidor liberation

CORREGIDOR—Philippine and US soldiers raised their flags yesterday on Corregidor Island in ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary of the island's liberation from Japanese forces in World War II.

On March 2, 1945, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the wartime commander of allied forces in the Pacific, raised the American flag on Corregidor, three years after he was ordered to leave it as the Japanese were invading the Philippines, then a US colony.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, and the envoys of Britain, Australia and New Zealand—wartime allies of the United States—offered wreaths at the Pacific War Memorial, where a brief program was held beside ruins of US garrisons.

Beth Day Romulo, president of the Corregidor Foundation, recalled "that glorious day when Corregidor Island was finally retaken" following 14 days of fierce combat between Japanese and US forces, including paratroopers from the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team.

Military historians say of 6,550 Japanese soldiers on the island, only 50 survived. The paratroopers lost 169 men.

Romulo said Corregidor, also known as "The Rock" and now a tourist destination, should be preserved as a "dramatic reminder of the horrors of war and the courage of those who lived and died here."

Ricciardone said commemorating the sacrifices of US and Filipino soldiers was an opportunity "to rededicate ourselves to paying that same price they paid to upholding ever and always the cause of freedom and democracy" by strengthening alliances "including some of those who were our adversaries in World War II."

The Americans held a separate ceremony for the paratroopers attended by Maj. Gen. Elbert N. Perkins, commander of the US Army Japan and 9th Theater Support Command.

The 503rd Veterans Association said in a message read by Ricciardone: "The sons of America, like their fathers and grandfathers, face a new war, a war against extremist terrorism."

"Once again, good men—our best and brightest—struggle so that others may live in liberty," it said.

SMC rights offer stymied by court case

THE P17.8-billion stock rights offering of San Miguel Corp. might not push through due to a pending court case filed by SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, Jr. disputing the government's claim on a portion of the coco levy-funded shares in the food and beverage giant, a Palace official said.

"I have a feeling no final action can really be done yet. The matter is still elevated for reconsideration in the Supreme Court," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said in a briefing.

Ermita later admitted that he is unaware whether indeed the SMC has brought the case before the SC after the Sandiganbayan made a final decision.

However, SMC officials said the SMC share ownership dispute has not been elevated to the SC but has been kept with the Sandiganbayan.

The Sandiganbayan has already rejected Cojuangco's appeal questioning the court's decision upholding the government's claim to the 27 percent equity stake in SMC acquired through coco levy funds in the 1970s. The government is also contesting Cojuangco's claim to another 20 percent stake in SMC in a separate case. On Tuesday, Cojuangco urged the Sandiganbayan to start the trial on his 18-year old case asserting his ownership of 20 percent of SMC.

Presidential Chief Legal Counsel Merceditas Gutierrez reckoned that "no action can be done" on the rights offer. "There was a pleading filed before the Sandiganbayan. We still have to find out what is the nature of the pleading and what they are asserting before the Sandiganbayan," Gutierrez said.

The government will be compelled to shell out P4.58 billion, according to Ermita, to maintain the government-controlled shares in SMC if the company proceeds to offer 10 percent of its shares to the public.

Ermita also said that the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) should demand an explanation from its five nominees on the SMC board on why they voted in favor of a stock rights offering.

Solon calls for transparency on Marcos wealth

By Philip C. Tubeza

AKBAYAN party-list Rep. Mario Aguja yesterday called for more transparency in the disbursement of the P35 billion Marcos ill-gotten wealth as he expressed concern that there would be no money left for the human rights victim at the rate the funds were being spent.

Aguja issued the call after the House committee on oversight learned yesterday that nearly P9 billion had already been disbursed last year alone.

Aguja said the committee required treasury and budget officials to present certifications from the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to show that there would be enough money to compensate human rights victims.

However, treasury officials told the committee that a total of P26.91 billion remained intact.

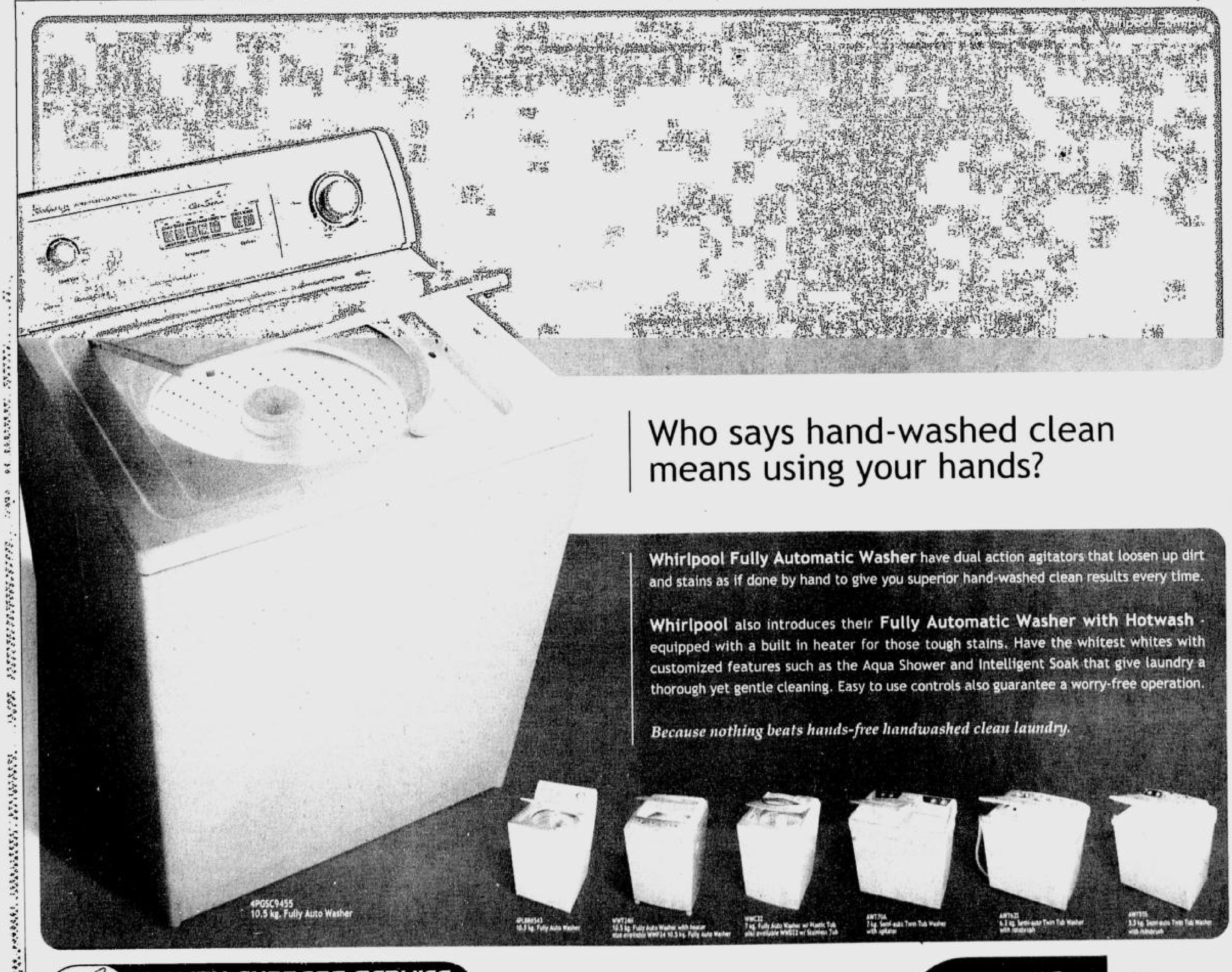
Deputy National Treasurer Gisela Lood said a total of P11.91 billion had been deposited with the Land Bank broken--P2.9 billion in euro account and P9.01 billion in dollar account. Another P15 billion is with the BSP.

Last year, P14.73 billion was supposed to be appropriated for the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program, according to a Presidential Agrarian Reform Council position paper presented to the committee.

Of the P14.7 billion, P10.783 billion was set aside for land acquisition and distribution and P4.025 billion for program beneficiaries development, it added.

However, Agrarian Reform undersecretary Arne Ang said the Department of Agrarian Reform received only P8.8 billion as of October 2004.

He said P5.6 billion was spent for land acquisition while P1.9 billion was disbursed for program beneficiaries.



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Palace rejects new call for lifting of moratorium on death penalty

THE GOVERNMENT rejected anew calls for the lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty following the increased incidence of kidnapping in the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said she was not keen on changing her policy on the moratorium on executions.

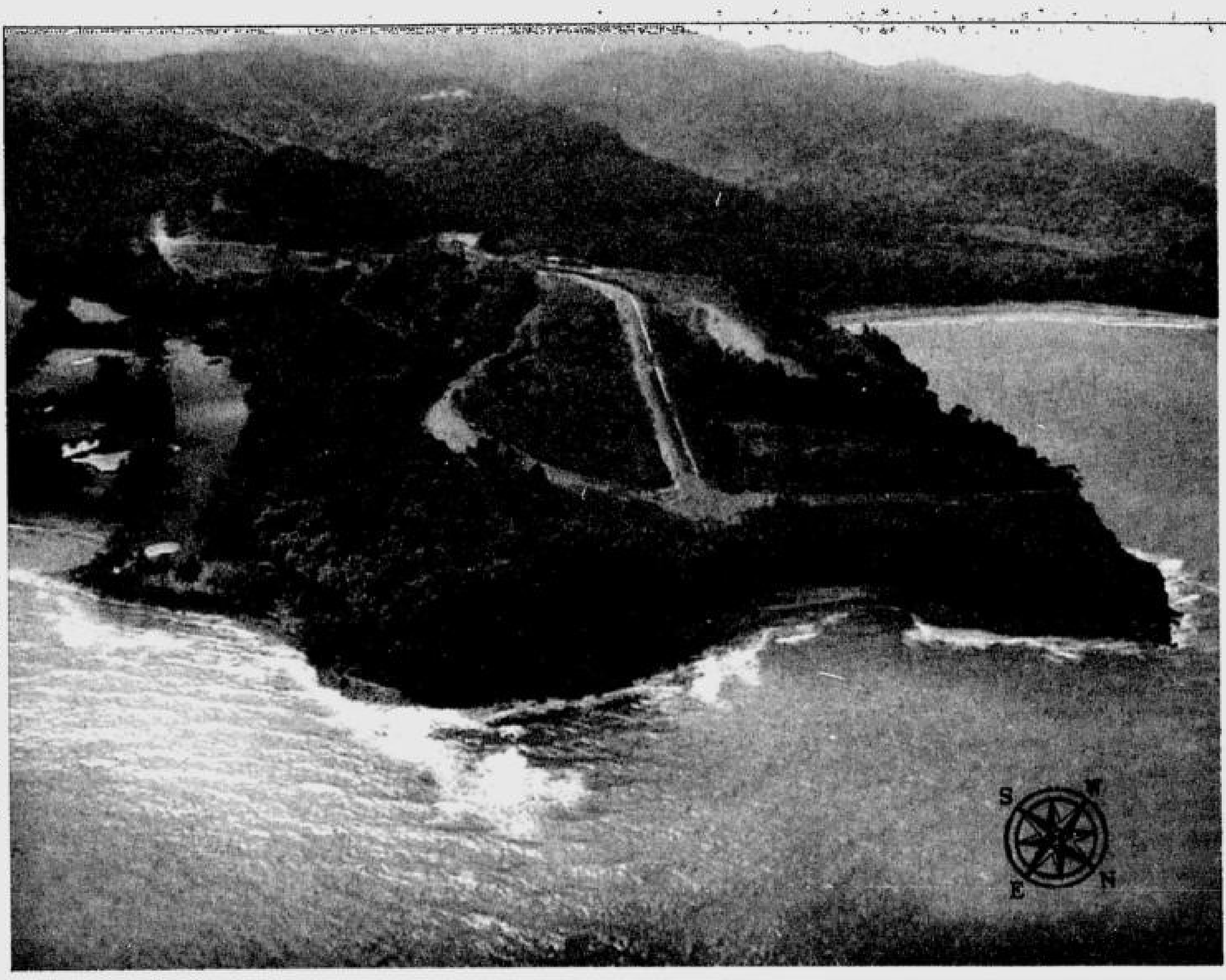
"We were able to solve kidnapping without the implementation of the death penalty," Ms.Arroyo said in La Carlota City, Negros Occidental.

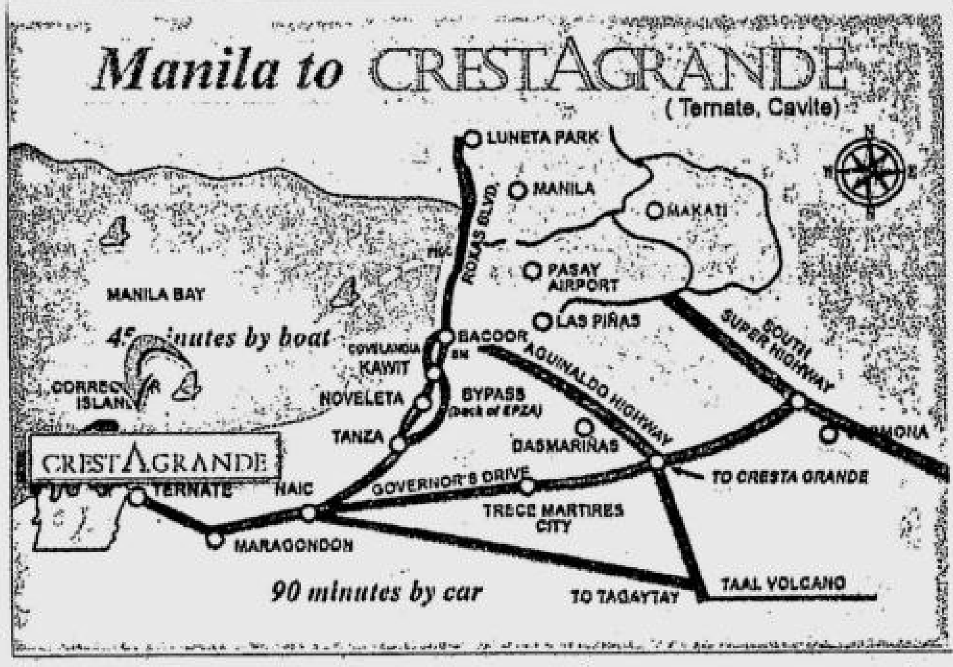
Told that the Filipino-Chinese community was making the call for the implementation of the death penalty, she said she did not think that all of its leaders were supporting that call.

"You ask Tessie Ang See. She is not joining, but she is the most militant of the antikidnapping non-governmental organization," President Arroyo added.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the government's policy on a moratorium on executions, which it has been observing since 2001, remains.

Christine O Avendaño

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CARMONA
DASMARIÑAS
TANZA
CORREGIDOR ISLAND
CRESTAGRANDE
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NAIC
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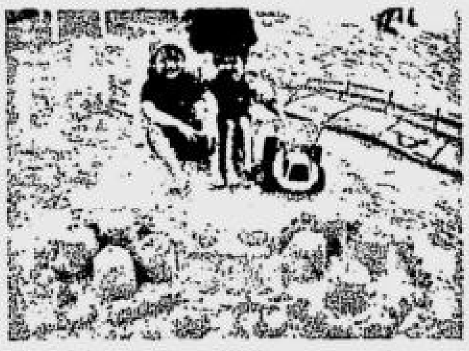

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Apollo C. Ebora (WAGA)
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4th Place

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Message

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(RGB)

Timoteo B. Ruiz
8th Place
(RGB)

Amelita P. Adizas
9th Place
(ANGELES)

Rizalino A. Arao, Jr.
10th Place
(RGB)

Rodolfo D. Eteban
11th Place
(ANGELES)

Giovanni Manalo
12th Place
(TWA)

Josefina T. Tayoto
13th Place
(RGB)

Napoleon S. Jaranilla
14th Place
(RGB)

Jose B. Ibea
15th Place
(RGB)

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Pamela Baranda
BRANCH/GENERAL AGENCY MANAGER
(TGA)

Amadeo V. Gera
AGENCY MANAGER
(TGA)

Edna M. Gera
ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
(TGA)

THE QUALIFIERS

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- Salazar, Sonia B. *RGB*
- Obrique, Jovencio H. *RGB*
- Regaliza, Josefina L. *LGRA*
- Castillo, Lawrence *LGRA*
- Cabanlong, Erlinda *RLD*
- Duque, Ma. Corazon *TARLAC*
- Taborlupa, Nenita E. *ANGELES*
- De Vera, Ma. Rosabel Q. *VA*

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

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- Castillon, Rodulfo A. *RGB*
- Chuacuco, Imelda R. *RGB*
- Santos, Mercedes R. *PGA*
- Penaflor, Antonio B. *RGA*
- Godinez, Marlon Q. *CEBU*
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- Almazan, Janet C. *AA*
- Miranda, EddieMar M. *RGB*
- Ibea, Augusto B. *RGB*
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- Pebenito, Rosemarie J. *RGB*
- Abel, Alicia P. *TARLAC*
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- Roman, Emily S. *RGB*
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- Cenit, Alejandro Wilfredo D. *ILOILO*
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- Mercado, Lucas C. *RGB*
- Jurisprudencia, Criselda B. *RGB*
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- Nablo, Nancy B. *RBC*
- Quinan, Normelinda R. *VA*
- Mateo, Ma. Concepcion V. *CABANATUAN*
- Podador, Angela B. *DAVAO*
- Cruz, Annie R. *RGB*
- Maguindayao, Marilyn A. *RGB*
- Coronel, Rosina P. *DAVAO*
- Sinagula, Anastacio C. *CDO*
- Alcasid, Joanne Kristine *NLIA*
- Bulabos, Joel D. *ANGELES*
- Domingo, Edwin A. *RGB*
- Ramos, Ivette Lynn A. *BDA*
- Figueroa, Evangeline M . *BSA*
- De Leon, Venus *WAGA*
- Garchitorena, Virginia L. *RGB*
- Guillermo, Michael M. *RGB*
- Mallari, Jenelli R. *TARLAC*
- Isidoro, Renato Luis *VA*
- Ong, Paul Allan P. *AA*
- Abiad, Leticia *AA*
- Consulta, Margarita P. *AA*
- Page, Lolita O. *BSA*
- Clavecilla, Noel G. *LGRA*
- Campomanes, Ricardo R. *LGRA*
- Mojica, Imelda *CEBU*
- Rom, Norcelita *VA*
- Martinez, Jouie P. *SMS*
- Guerrero, Antonio B. *TARLAC*
- Vibal, Edilberto A. *WAGA*
- Capacia, Margie A. *RGB*
- Del Prado, Virgilia V. *LGRA*
- Hernandez, Josephine T. *LGRA*
- Fajardo, Salvador Carino *RGB*
- Sagabay, Reynaldo Sr. B. *RGB*
- Padilla, Manuel C. *RGB*
- Cervantes, Edna T. *LGRA*
- Odio, Giovanni *VA*
- Manansala, Teresita P. *ANGELES*
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- Bernal, Emelina D. *CDO*
- De Ocampo, Clene *BCD*
- Tac-An, Merlyn C. *CDO*
- Salgado, Elsie A. *BSA*
- Dammang, Zalda L. *PGA*
- Abello, Nathaniel *BCD*
- Elman, Dione L. *DAVAO*
- Dela Cruz, Esmeralda M. *TGA*
- Marty, Ma. Socorro R. *VA*
- Justiniani, Carl Ray E. *CDO*
- Blanza, Rosalie *ISABELA*
- Oraiz, Roldan O. *PALAWAN*
- Constantino, Elizabeth *VA*
- Lapastora, Lucina P. *FIA*
- Fernando, Loanne Rose E. *BSA*
- Bolos, Michael *DAGUPAN*
- Bernardo, Leonore J. *RBC*
- Santos, Rodolfo Jose Jr. R. *RGB*
- Albarracin, Joan E. *WAGA*
- Asilo, Edwin *BSA*
- Urtula, Ermina L. *FIA*
- Azores, Ofelia *PGA*
- Santos, Michelle G. *RGB*
- Albarracin, Ma. Victoria V. *WAGA*
- Habana, Josephine *RBC*
- Guzman, Geraldine *LGRA*
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- Julian, Erlinda *RLD*
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Erap's Muslim foundation funds not audited, Sandigan told

By Nelson F. Flores

DESPITE the millions of pesos at its disposal, the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation has had no internal or external auditor in the past five years of its existence, it was revealed at yesterday's hearing of the plunder case against jailed ex-President Estrada at the Sandiganbayan.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said he found it odd that the EMYF which had more than P200 million in its coffers had no auditors keeping track of its finances.

This clearly showed that the foundation had a purpose other than that of being a foundation, he said.

"The foundation is merely a front," Villa-Ignacio said.

The state prosecutor also noted that the EMYF has not submitted any financial report to the Securities and Exchange Commission since it started operations in 2000, a clear violation of corporation laws.

Speaking to reporters after the hearing, Villa-Ignacio said the earlier testimony of defense witness Danilo Reyes was irrelevant and only proved that the "EMYF's recent activities were only an afterthought."

The testimony of Reyes, acting treasurer of the EMYF and a University of the Philippines associate professor, was irrelevant because he testified on events that happened after the plunder case had been filed against Estrada, Villa-Ignacio said.

He also noted that Reyes' testimony was inconsistent with documentary evidence submitted by the defense panel.

For instance, Villa-Ignacio explained, Reyes claimed that the EMYF holds office at the 15th floor of the Strata 100 building on Emerald Avenue in the Ortigas Center while documentary evidence like the business and sanitation permits showed the foundation to be holding office on the fifth floor.

However, defense lawyer Jose Flaminiano said there was nothing irregular about the EMYF's not having an internal or external auditor. He said Reyes had clearly pointed out that the foundation was in hiatus for three years because of some supervening events.

"Besides, there were only very few transactions and the EMYF is made up of reputable persons whose integrity and competence can be relied upon. They can audit themselves, there is no need for them to hire auditors," Flaminiano said.

Flaminiano said the testimony of Reyes clearly proved that the EMYF was a legitimate foundation whose goal was to help deserving Muslim students.

As to the alleged inconsistencies in Reyes' testimony with respect to the documentary evidence, Flaminiano said the inconsistencies were the result of an error on the part of the Pasig local authority.

"They were the ones who issued and signed these documents, not the EMYF," Flaminiano said.

Another defense lawyer, Cleofe Berzola, said the recent activities of the EMYF were just a continuation of its scholarship program which was started in 2000 but was unfortunately interrupted that same year.

She noted that the inability of the EMYF to function in the past three years was because of factors beyond the foundation's control.

Reyes had testified that the foundation was unable to finance the schooling of deserving Muslims because of the freezing of the EMYF's funds after it was accused of laundering the bribe money that Estrada allegedly received from operators of jueteng, the illegal numbers game.

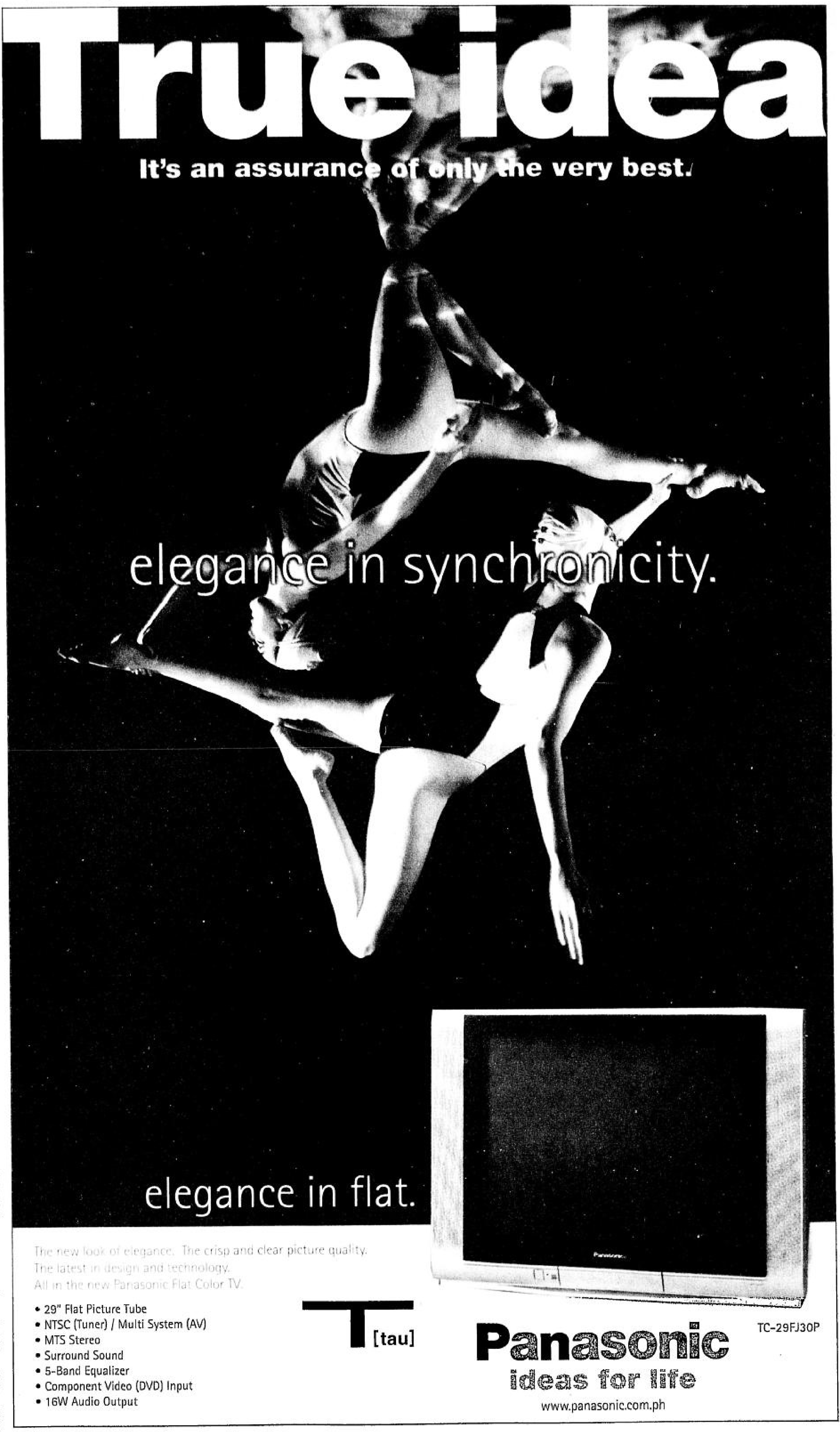
Peping Francisco; 55

JOSE "Peping" Francisco died on Feb. 26 in Glendale, California. He was 55.

He is survived by his wife Erminda, son Jojo, mother Demetria, siblings Bobot and Lydia, and grandchildren Diego, Diega and Diegie.

Cremation rites will be held on Friday, March 4 at Glendale Forest Lawn in Glendale at 9 a.m.

A Mass for the enthronement of the ashes will be celebrated on Monday, March 7, at the same venue.



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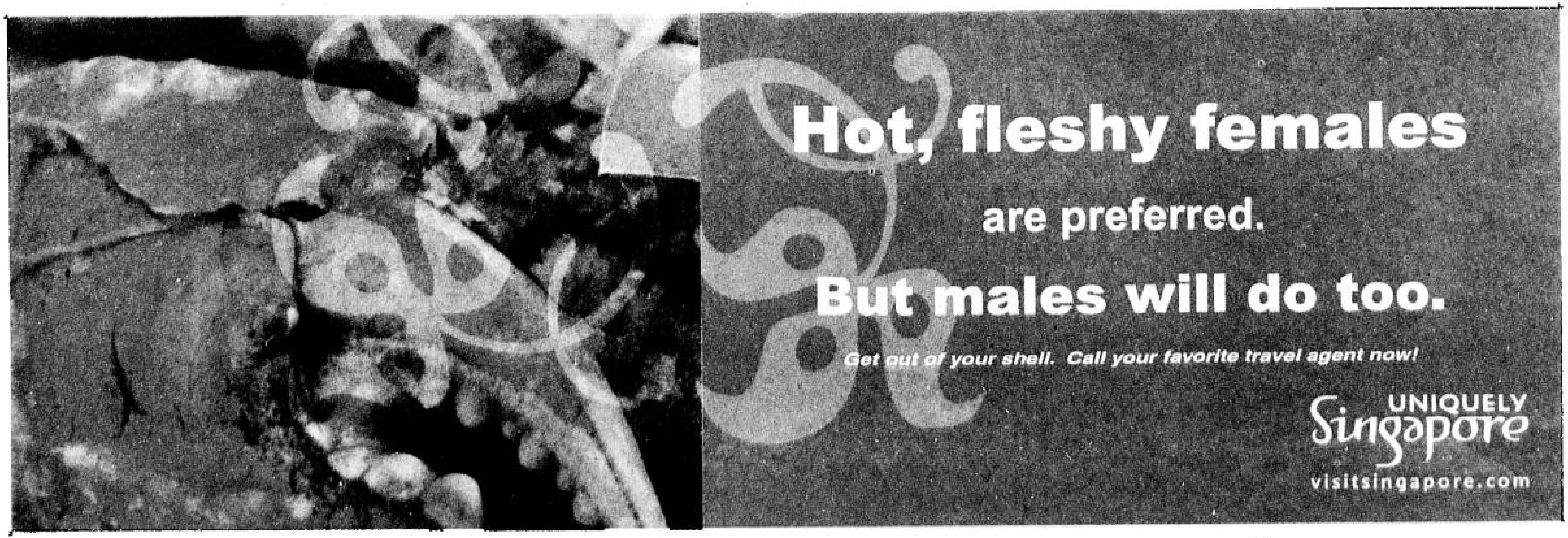

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Palace to take tax refund case to SC

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AFTER BEING setback by the Court of Appeals, Malacañang will elevate its P1-billion tax refund case against Fortune Tobacco Corp. to the Supreme Court.

"The decision of the Court of Appeals favoring Fortune Tobacco is a setback in the government's initiative with regard to requiring proper tax compliance from taxpayers," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

On Tuesday, the Court of Appeals ordered a P1.035-billion refund to Fortune Tobacco Corp. representing excise taxes paid by the tobacco firm from January 2000 to December 2002.

Reacting to the CA decision, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said: "It's a major blow to the government. It has to be referred to the OSG (Office of the Solicitor General) and appealed before the CA."

In its ruling, the CA affirmed the earlier findings and conclusions of the Court of Tax Appeals which had ordered the tax refund of P1.035 billion to Fortune Tobacco.

Fortune Tobacco had sought a refund of P680.4 million of its excise tax payments from Jan. 1, 2000 to Dec. 31, 2001 and P355.4 million from Jan. 1, 2002 to Dec. 31, 2002, claiming it paid higher taxes than it should have after the government shifted the tax system from ad valorem to specific tax on Jan. 1, 1997.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue had earlier filed a motion for reconsideration with the CA's second division which upheld the CTA ruling.

The taxes, paid under BIR Revenue Regulation 17-99 which was nullified by the tax court, covered Fortune brands Champion M 100, Salem M 100, Camel F King, Camel Lights Box 20's, Camel Filters Box 20's, Winston F. Kings and Winston Lights.

The appellate body ruled that Congress, under RA 8240, intended to raise only by 12 percent the excise tax rates on cigarettes even if they were lower than the taxes paid by Fortune Tobacco before Jan. 1, 2000. The government has succeeded in raising the "sin tax" rates with the passage late last year of higher excise taxes on both cigarettes and alcohol products that raise revenues by as much as P15 billion a year.

'I WAS NEVER PREGNANT'

Woman sues Gonzalez accuser of libel

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Claiming she was a victim of a "conspiracy to destroy the political career" of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, a 27-year-old woman accused of having an illicit affair with Gonzalez has filed a P2-million libel suit against her accuser and nine other people, including a lawyer and an Iloilo City councilor.

"We will see each other in court," said Tessie Jamolo, a first-year law student at the University of Iloilo and a councilor of Barangay Tanza Bonifacio here.

Jamolo, who appeared in a press conference at the Iloilo Grand Hotel yesterday, denied she had an affair with Gonzalez.

She denied that she had gotten pregnant during the alleged affair, which is supposed to have occurred when Gonzalez was congressman of the lone district of Iloilo City and Jamolo was chair of the Sangguniang Kabataan in her village. Gonzalez was a three-term House member from 1995 to 2004.

"I was not pregnant and was never pregnant," said Jamolo, who broke down several times during the press briefing in which her parents, Rafael and Florita, and lawyer Antonio Pesina sat with her.

On Tuesday, Jamolo filed a libel complaint against Jose Roberto Montilla, city councilor Marietta Orleans and lawyer Bonifacio Alentajan.

Also named respondents were staff members of the Iloilo-based newspaper "Panay News," including Daniel Fajardo (editor in chief), Belen Gumban (editor), Del Estrella (managing editor), Renato Layson (opinion editor), Carmelo Ang (business editor), Montesa Griño (sports editor) and Lyn Tempo (entertainment editor).

Jamolo asked for P2 million in moral damages, P100,000 in lawyer's fees and P100,000 for litigation expenses to be jointly paid by the respondents.

Pesina said they were also considering filing a perjury case against Montilla.

The allegations of the alleged illicit relationship were contained in an affidavit executed in September 2004 by Montilla, an ex-employee of Gonzalez, which was filed before the congressional Commission on Appointments early this year.

The affidavit was also used in a disbarment case last year against Gonzalez filed before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines by Orleans.

In his affidavit, Montilla claimed he knew of the alleged relationship between Gonzalez and Jamolo when he began working in Gonzalez's congressional office sometime in 1998.

He claimed to have seen Gonzalez and Jamolo kissing each other in the conference room of Gonzalez's office in Iloilo on several occasions.

In her complaint, Jamolo called the allegations "malicious and untruthful" and "part of a grand conspiracy to block the appointment of Gonzalez."

Jamolo said Orleans and Alentajan "maligned" her reputation by using Montilla's affidavit in the cases they filed against Gonzalez.

She accused staff members of Panay News of aiding in the attack against her by publishing "highly malicious articles" in at least three issues of the newspaper.

She said she did not file the libel case earlier because she was dissuaded by her parents and friends who wanted to avoid more public scrutiny. She said she also thought that if she remained silent the issue would die down.

But she decided to file for libel after the issue was raised again in the Commission on Appointments which has yet to confirm Gonzalez's appointment.

"Someone has to answer for destroying my reputation and dignity as a woman," Jamolo said in her affidavit.

She said she had not been prompted by Gonzalez to file the libel complaint.

"This is my own battle to clear my reputation that was tainted by these accusations," Jamolo said yesterday.

She said she was willing to testify before the CA so she can clear the issue.

Reached for comment, Montilla said he was standing by his affidavit. "I'm just telling the truth," he said in a telephone interview.

He said he welcomed the libel suit "so that the truth will really come out."

Orleans, who was a political supporter of Gonzalez before the two had a falling-out during the 2004 elections, accused Gonzalez of having had a hand in the libel complaint.

She said she would not back down and withdraw the cases she had filed against Gonzalez.

Missing for 4 years, Pinay comes home in a coffin

By Jerome Aning

FOUR years after being reported missing in the Netherlands, Veneranda "Bebe" Paña will return home to the Philippines in a coffin.

The suspect in her murder was no less than her Dutch husband Edwin Terwinkle, who was recently arrested by authorities. He also had confessed to hiding her body under the living room of his twin brother Elmer's home in Eindhoven, North Brabant province.

Paña's family in her native Badian, Cebu, wanted the Philippine government to pursue the case until Terwinkle is convicted. The custody of the couple's 4-year-old son has been turned over to Paña's in-laws, according to her sister Anna Marie Enjambre.

Anna Marie, who has sought the assistance of the overseas workers' group Migrante International, would call on the Dutch Embassy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and several lawmakers today to press for Terwinkle's conviction.

Paña, 32, was declared missing on Jan. 19, 2001. The location of her body was disclosed exactly four years later by Terwinkle. He and his brother Elmer were both taken to custody but the latter was later released.

In a phone interview, Anna Marie said her sister never mentioned having any problem with Edwin. The couple lived in Eindhoven, headquarters of the electronic giant Philips and the DAF car firm.

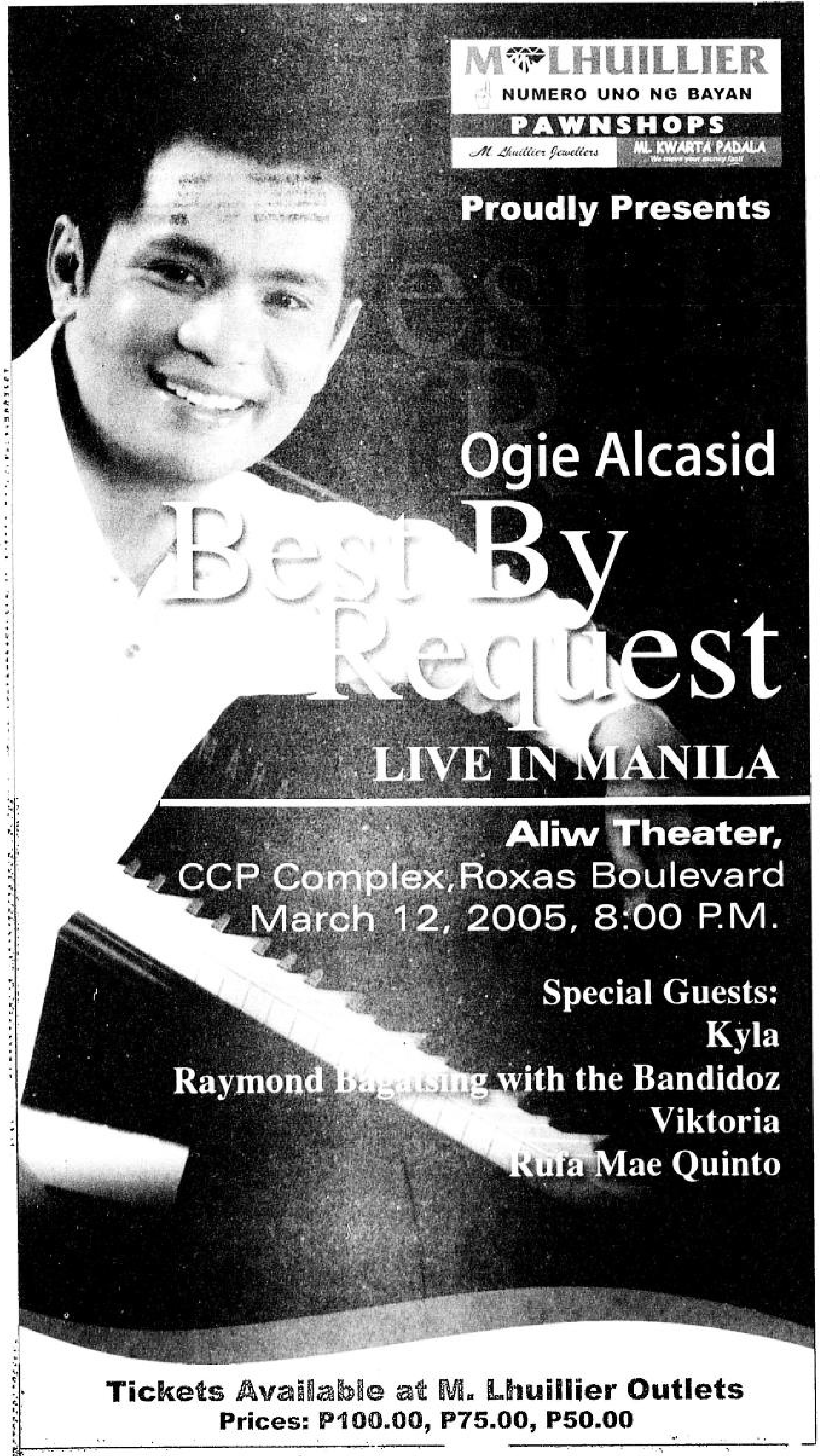
"She last called home on Dec. 28, 2000 to greet us for the holidays. She was very happy and excited about the coming baptism of his son," Anna Marie said.

Migrante secretary general Maita Santiago said last Feb. 17, Paña was almost cremated and buried in the Netherlands after the Dutch Justice Ministry released her body to Edwin's family.

The burial was stopped at the last minute after a court issued an injunction the same day. The Paña family, through their Dutch lawyer and with the assistance of Filipino groups Stichting Silangan and Pinay sa Holland-Gabriela, then pursued and won a court decision yesterday allowing Paña's remains to be flown to her family in Cebu.

"We join the Paña family's call for the immediate conviction of Edwin and all those responsible for Bebe's death," Santiago said.

The body is expected to arrive at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Friday night.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Corrections

IN THE BUSINESS section of yesterday's issue, a headline on Page B1—"Total gov't debt balloons to P3.81B"—misstated the current debt of the national government. The national government's debt has reached P3.81 trillion—not P3.81 billion.

* * *

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a front page story—"GMA warns solons on VAT hike delay"—misstated that President Macapagal-Arroyo hosted a luncheon marking the Rotary Club of Manila's centennial. The President hosted the luncheon on the occasion of the centennial of the Rotary Club, which Paul P. Harris founded in Chicago on Feb. 23, 1905.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
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The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) wishes to invite bidders for **CORPORATE SECURITY DEVICES.**

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The PhilHealth had provided funds for this project. The approved budget for this contract is Php**7,000,000.00.**

A pre-bid conference will be held on March 9, 2005 at 1:30 p.m. at the OSBAC (Rm. 1804).

The bidders shall prepare their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposal in three separate sealed envelopes and drop in the respective bid boxes located at the above-mentioned address.

Submission of bids will be on April 4, 2005 on or before 12:00 noon at the OSBAC. Opening of bids will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same venue. Any bidder who comes late will not be entertained. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804. Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.

The BAC-ITR shall determine if each prospective bidder is eligible to participate in the bidding by examining the completeness of each prospective bidder's eligibility requirements or statements against a checklist of requirements, using the **non-discretionary "pass/fail"** criteria.

To guarantee the faithful performance by the winning bidder of his/her obligations under the contract prepared in accordance with the bidding documents, he/she shall post a Bid Security in any of the following forms and amount;

Forms of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid	Amount of Bid Security
Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	One percent (1%)	Php 70,000.00
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1 1/2%)	Php 105,000.00
Surety Bond	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)	Php 175,000.00
Foreign Government Guarantee	One hundred percent (100%)	Php 7,000,000.00

We look forward to your participation in this worthwhile endeavor.

PhilHealth reserves the right to waive any formality on the eligibility requirements of this project. Furthermore, PhilHealth reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd) MELINDA C. MERCADO
SVP, Health Insurance Operations Sector and
Chairperson, BAC-ITR

(PDI—Feb 22 & March 3, 2005)

DAVIDE

Davide to keynote Women's Day

THE UNITED Nations Development Fund for Women, National Committee for Unifem Philippines celebrates International Women's Day on March 10, at 4 p.m. at the main lounge of the Manila Polo Club in Makati City.

International Women's Day, celebrated internationally on March 8 every year, will focus this year on the theme "Gender Equality 2005: Building A More Secure Future," with particular emphasis on issues around development, human rights, security and disasters.

IWD gives recognition to every woman for the gains and accomplishments of the movement to advance the condition of the world's women against feminized poverty, gender based violence and inequality.

Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. will be the guest of honor and speaker for the event. During the occasion, Davide will be conferred the first honorary membership to Unifem Philippines.

Unifem Philippines president Georgitta P. Puyat, will open the program and will induct new members. Ms Astarte D. Abraham, a freelance performing artist will render a few songs on women.

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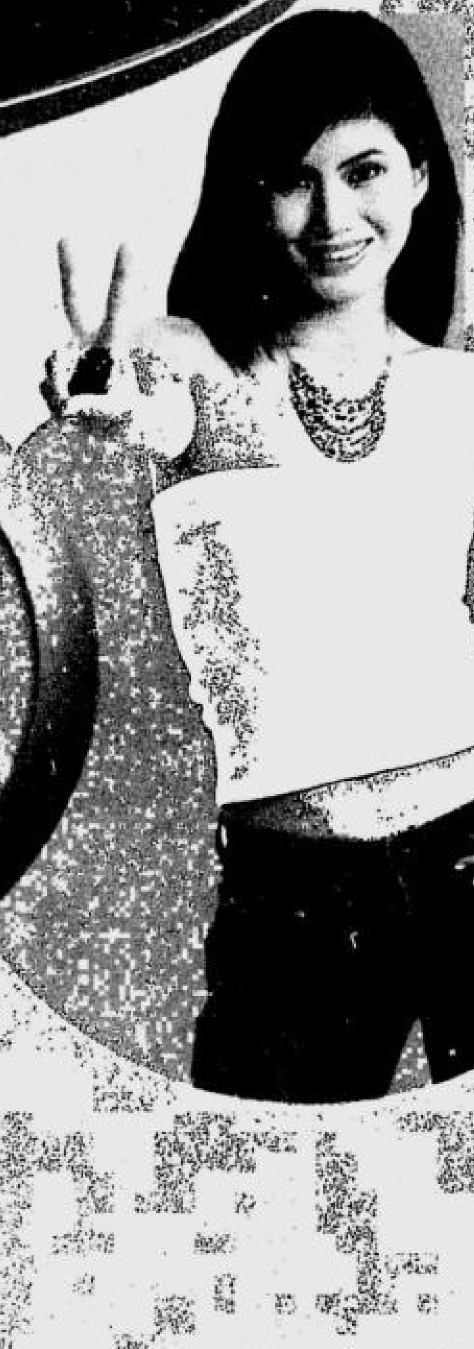

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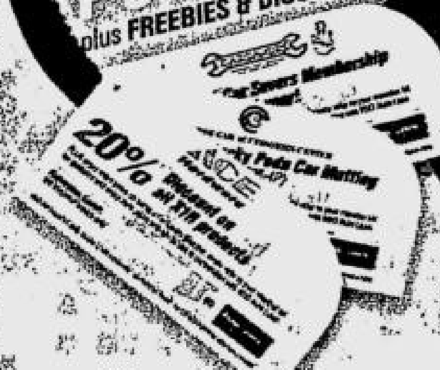

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Pork behind budget OK

From page A1

get. He recalled that the Senate caucus, which led to the unprecedented Senate adoption of the budget passed by the other chamber, started with Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate finance committee, presenting the problem.

"They (congressmen) don't want to meet us in bicam and if they do, they will increase their pork barrel to P70 million. If there is no bicam, the (old) budget will be reenacted. Choose," Villar reportedly said.

Earlier, Villar was said to have received a call from Andaya that the House would move for the restoration of the P70-million pork barrel for its members if a bicameral conference was convened.

Lacson noted that the bicam was usually a venue for horse-trading. "At a time when we're passing the VAT (value-added tax), it is hard to explain to the people that we are imposing new taxes and increasing our pork barrel," Villar said.

Villar presented his "formula" as a solution to the problem: adopt the House-approved budget which provides a much-lower pork barrel.

All at once, Lacson said there was a consensus among the senators. He said senators would have no face to show to members of the House and to the public if they restored their pork barrel.

Bad faith

Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the House passed the budget with the reduced pork barrel in bad faith. She said members of the House passed the budget knowing that they will have a chance to restore their pork barrel during the bicameral conference.

By passing the budget swiftly, members of the House put the heat on the Senate to make the public think the senators were the ones to blame for the delay, Santiago said.

"Well it seems very clear that they have done it in bad faith. They were up to their old tricks. These are worthy of children in the play-yard but I think when we are dealing with public funds in the hundreds of billions (of pesos) we'll just have to take ourselves seriously," she said.

Inside story

Villar was willing to talk about the inside story of his coup only up to a point, saying he did not want to quarrel with the House which he once led as Speaker before being elected to the Senate in 2001. He said the pork barrel was the most sensitive issue.

"We were really worried about the stand of the House. The question is, is there really an intention (on their part) to finish the bicam before the (March 18 Lenten) break because we cannot afford (not to do so)," Villar told the INQUIRER.

He said he had been waiting for three weeks for the House to go into bicam with the Senate.

Villar's strategy

"At first, I thought there were only some problems (in setting a bicam) but as we near two weeks before the break, I called the group (of senators and told them) that I could not trust this anymore. I was convinced there was no plan on the part of the House leadership to go to a bicam. There was a plan to reenact the budget," Villar said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said Villar presented the concept after he got fed up with the House strategy. "This was the sole idea of Villar and he sold it to the senators," Arroyo said.

House trick

He said only Villar could have conceived the idea because of his experience as Speaker of the House. "From where he sat, he knew (what the congressmen will do). He read the situation rightly," Arroyo said.

He said Villar first talked to him, Senators Francis Pangilinan and Ralph Recto who are members of the so-called Wednesday Group. When the four of them agreed, Villar talked to other senators to see if they would agree.

Villar said he had been toying with the idea for some time and broached it to his close friends among the other senators, and later to the rest of the senators, for some weeks.

But he already thought of this formula during last year's budget deliberations. He recalled that last year, the budget was reenacted because the House also did not want to go to a bicam and time ran out on the senators.

The only way

"That's the only way but I don't know. Maybe we didn't have the guts to do it that time," Villar said. He said adopting the House version was the only solution to prevent a reenactment of the budget for the third time.

"To me that's the only way to shorten (the impasse). We (senators) can take a reduction (of pork barrel) but we cannot afford not to have a new budget," Villar said.

"I think it's a good move because we acted on moral high ground. The impression of the people is that all we do is quarrel," Villar said.

No room for more pork

At a press conference, Andaya said that if the national budget were a *longganisa* (sausage) there was no more room to stuff more pork. "We could have (restored the full PDAF) when we passed the budget in the House," he said.

"Why would we pin our hopes on the bicam? But we maintained fiscal discipline. We resisted temptation. We stuck to the President's version. I take the humble view that our friends in the smaller House finally saw the superiority of the House version," he said.

Andaya admitted that by resorting to a parliamentary maneuver, the senators had stolen the thunder from House members.

He said the move was not illegal because adopting the House-approved P907.6-billion budget in toto, and sending it to the President for immediate signing, was constitutional.

"A bicameral conference is convened only to reconcile disagreeing provisions. But since there is none, it's OK," said Andaya, stressing that in the end, "the people won."

Locsin took the floor following a parliamentary inquiry by Rep. Arnulfo Fuentebella (NPC-KNP, Camarines Sur) on the decision of the Senate to do away with the bicameral conference committee to tackle the proposed 2005 national budget.

Outrage

Locsin said the issue demanded not an inquiry but a "manifestation of outrage by this House because this House received a slap in the face."

Locsin said that although the Senate had pretended that it pulled a surprise attack on the House, the senators were the ones profiting from bicameral conference meetings.

He insisted that the motivation for this "slur, vicious attack" on the House was triggered by Lacson's revelation that the senators had tried to pad their pork barrel.

"This is not a subject for parliamentary inquiry, this is not certainly a subject for a move of dialogue ... because screw the dialogue. These people keep on insulting us every time of stealing, or refusing to work, or just slacking around. And every time we catch them refusing to act like senators, they slap us in the face," he said.

No insertions

Villar refused to engage in a verbal tussle with House members. "I don't want to antagonize them," said Villar in a phone interview.

"Definitely I can assure you that we don't want any increase (in our pork). There are no insertions," said Villar, explaining that the Senate did not also touch the House-approved intelligence funds for the military, police and the Office of the President "because the current level is even insufficient."

Villar said the Senate move was "totally unexpected" by the House while the President was completely (taken by) surprise."

Senator Arroyo said Speaker Jose de Venecia and Andaya were not happy about the Senate decision.

When he talked with Andaya on the phone shortly after the Senate cast its vote, Arroyo recalled that Andaya took a long pause. *"Pinasa nyo?* (You passed it?) Then a long pause."

President Arroyo yesterday thanked the Senate for its "statesmanship" in the passage of the 2005 budget, which she said would allow the government to go full throttle in its fight against poverty.

She aid she would sign the budget immediately. *With a report from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Surprise! Senate
budget

"IN CELEBRATION OF GOD'S GOODNESS," Dr. Elder Ian Paulsen, worldwide president of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, arrives in Manila to observe the 100th year of the church in the country. The Church's southern Asia Pacific division's regional headquarters is in Silang, Cavite, which directs Church programs in 18 Asian countries.

ROGER MARGALLO

A MISH-MASH of evidence allegedly recovered from the Mandaluyong hideout of the two suspects in the Valentine's Day bombing is presented by the police to the media on the day of the raid late last month.

Did gov't agents...

From page A1

The evidence allegedly recovered during a raid on Feb. 22 from the Mandaluyong hideout of two men suspected to be behind the Valentine's Day bombing of a bus in Makati appears to be recycled, according to a bomb expert.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the INQUIRER source said he had compared notes with other explosives experts and concluded that the purported evidence against Gamal "Tapay" Baharan and Angelo Trinidad alias Abu Khalil Trinidad was virtually the same stuff confiscated during a raid at the South Star Plaza on the South Superhighway in Makati last Sept. 30.

"We are wondering why the same items we recovered from the Makati raid turned up at the Mandaluyong raid," said the source, a military demolitions officer.

Both raids were conducted by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces with the cooperation of local police.

The list of explosive materials supposedly recovered from the Makati raid includes a blasting fuse measuring 30 meters, five boxes containing blasting caps, one-fourth kilogram of ammonium, one-half block of C-4 explosives, three packs of C-4 in two toothpaste tubes, and five plastic bottles also containing C-4.

The items supposedly found in the hideout of Baharan and Trinidad in Mandaluyong included a hand grenade, three boxes of blasting caps, five boxes of 45mm ammunition, a time fuse measuring 52 feet, two small clocks, a number of small batteries, suspected C-4 in two toothpaste tubes, a film container, and a plastic hair oil bottle.

Familiar

The stuff was presented to the media together with Baharan and Trinidad on the day of the raid.

An official of Barangay Bangkal in Makati, where the South Star Plaza is located, yesterday told the INQUIRER that the evidence supposedly recovered from the Mandaluyong raid looked familiar.

Barangay secretary Mario Pimentel said there could be "a relation" between the two sets of evidence because of the explosive in the toothpaste tubes.

Pimentel was among the barangay officials who accompanied the raiding team to three units of the South Star Plaza. The explosive material was found in units 201 and 202.

An Iranian, Dr. Sharad Rahmanifard, and his son Rennen have been charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives. The father is at large.

Makati City Judge Oscar Pimentel of Branch 148, who is hearing the case against the Rahmanifards, said he had heard allegations that the bomb-making material recovered from the two raids was one and the same.

"That is what people have been telling me. But I can't say anything about that," Pimentel (no relation to the barangay official) told the INQUIRER.

Preposterous

Sought for comment, AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado dismissed suggestions that the evidence had been recycled.

"I think it's preposterous to insinuate that the AFP has been planting evidence. We stand by what we have recovered and what we have as evidence," Honrado told the INQUIRER by phone.

He said this had been a "regular accusation" leveled at the AFP.

Honrado also said Baharan and Trinidad had been turned over to the Department of Justice for proper investigation.

"Let the DOJ decide if the evidence was planted or not," he said.

Colonel's death may save ...

From page A1

However, he said vests really were needed in "close-quarter battles."

Pascual said the mobile clinic would be put up near the area of conflict to immediately attend to wounded soldiers.

"If a soldier is wounded, he is immediately evacuated from the area using an armored vehicle to the brigade tactical command post, which would be within 3-5 km of the combat zone," he told reporters.

The wounded, Pascual said, would no longer be brought to the Jolo Provincial Hospital, which has poor facilities, but directly to Camp Bautista, headquarters of the Army's 104th Infantry Brigade, in Busbos, Jolo.

Loss of blood

Villanueva, 42, commander of the 53rd Infantry Battalion, succumbed to blood loss from shrapnel wounds after a mortar attack in Barangay Bitan-ag in Panamao, Sulu, on Feb. 9. His replacement as commander was wounded.

Pascual said the tactical changes were proposed during an inspection visit to Jolo by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu. President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered Aby to assess the situation in the province.

At least six Army and Marine battalions battled several hundred supporters of Misuari, former chair of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and his allies.

After two weeks of fighting, government forces occupied a camp previously held by the gunmen late last month, but the rebels escaped.

Loyal followers of Misuari launched a rebellion on Feb. 6. The violence spread after troops began an offensive to hunt down Abu Sayyaf bandits that allegedly encroached in areas controlled by the MNLF.

Pursuit operations

Misuari signed a peace pact with the government in 1996, but he has been in jail for leading a fresh rebellion in Sulu in 2001.

Pascual said Abu had ordered military units to press on with the operations against the followers of Misuari.

The military commanders told Abu "they want to obtain certain military objectives first" before any ceasefire, Pascual said. He would not elaborate.

"They are going after more or less 100 rebels and they have a military objective at the moment. The instruction of General Abu to the ground commanders was to continue with the operations until there is a contrary order from the higher-ups," Pascual said.

"The morale is high and they really want to attain their military objectives," he said.

Brig. Gen. Nelson Allaga, chief of the 3rd Marine Brigade, said his troops were going after the Abu Sayyaf group led by Radulan Sahiron in the mountains in Patikul town.

"General Allaga said the ASG of Radulan Sahiron is a spent force. Commander Putol (Sahiron's alias) has 40 members and on the run with the Marines pursuing," Pascual said.

Local officials in Sulu have appealed to the government to stop military operations that have displaced about 30,000 villagers. *With an AFP report*

Palace to Sulu mayors: Stay put

MALACAÑANG has ordered all 18 mayors in the predominantly Muslim province to be "physically present" in their town halls to help the government in bringing back peace and order.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita issued the order after receiving reports that the mayors were nowhere to be seen during the recent clashes.

"I appealed to the mayors to be sure that they are physically present in Jolo or in Sulu in their respective towns so they can influence the situation in a manner that they can take care of the needs of their constituents," Ermita said in a briefing.

Avoiding the problem

The mayors, who were summoned to the Palace on Monday, said they were not in their municipalities all the time "because their constituents come around so often that there's nothing much they can give because Sulu is one of the poorest provinces," according to Ermita.

"The mayors don't have the wherewithal to be able to share with their constituents. So their way of avoiding the problem, they are not making themselves available," he said.

Heeding Palace call

Ermita said that even before the fighting erupted last month, "quite a few" of the mayors have remained scarce in their municipalities based on reports reaching his office.

He said the presence of the mayors in their towns would help in restoring peace and order.

"It will calm the citizenry regarding the situation by letting them know that the Armed Forces is there not to harm them but is there just to run after the troublemakers," Ermita said. "They can also dissuade others who want to join the melee, not to be involved. It's a big deal if the mayors are there."

The mayors promised to heed Malacañang's call, Ermita said. "They are going back they are going to their municipalities. Nobody mentioned requesting for bodyguards," he said.

While they admitted to staying either in Jolo proper or Zamboanga City, the mayors said there was no "unnecessary collateral damage" to the civilian population and structure in their towns.

Dinky, too

"No one among the mayors said there was damage done or civilians caught in crossfire. That goes to prove that as we go on, we have been developing some experience on how to address these problems of this nature so civilians will not be affected," Ermita said.

He said Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman had also been told to go to Sulu "more frequently" to take care of the thousands of civilians displaced by the fighting.

Ateneo Law wins mock-court regionals, eyes world title defense

THE ATENEO Law School team successfully defended its championship in the Jessup Cup, prized trophy of the Philip C. Jessup International Moot Court Competition. The regional finals, which would determine the team that would represent the Philippines in the world competition in Washington D.C., were held at the National Center for Culture and the Arts in Intramuros, Manila, on Feb. 19. It was participated in by the Ateneo Law School, UP College of Law and the UST College of Law.

Every year, representatives from the most prestigious law schools around the world (which include Harvard Law School, Oxford, National University of Singapore and the University of Sydney) vie for the honor, competing in a mock-court format emulating the International Court of Justice. Each team argues either for or against a specific problem before a panel of the most distinguished scholars in international law.

The Ateneo Jessup team, consisting of Joseph Anthony Lopez, Cristina Garcia Codilla, Patricia Ngochua, Evecar Cruz and Angel Love Go, coached by 2004 Jessup Champion Aimee Dabu, swept all three categories in the regional finals: best team, best oralist (JA Lopez), and best memorials. The team is now preparing for the world competitions starting March 22, and with every intention to successfully defend its 2004 crown.

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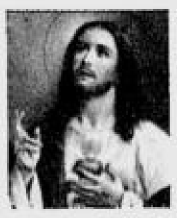

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Dr. Ricardo O. Fernandez finished his Doctor of Medicine at the University of Sto. Tomas. He is a consultant at the Makati Medical Center and Associate Board Examiner of the Philippine Board of Otolaryngology.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

World powers demand Palestinian crackdown

LONDON—World powers on Tuesday demanded immediate Palestinian action to catch those behind a suicide bombing in Israel, but also offered support for reforms aimed at halting violence and preparing Palestinians for statehood.

"We are trying to lay a foundation for a successful movement through the road map to a two-state solution," US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told a news conference in London.

She was speaking after an international meeting, hosted by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, that tried to underpin efforts by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to implement reforms, halt violence and resume peacemaking with Israel after the death last year of veteran Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

"We've got a script that is clearer today than ever before," Blair told a news conference with Abbas after the meeting.

Meeting on the sidelines, the quartet that sponsored the 2003 "road map" to peace—the European Union, Russia, the United Nations and the United States—urged "immediate action by the Palestinian Authority to apprehend and bring to justice the perpetrators" of the Tel Aviv bomb that killed five people.

Abbas, again condemning Friday's attack, which undermined a three-week-old truce with Israel, said security reforms were driven by Palestinian interests, not outside demands.

He told the news conference with Blair that Palestinians were committed to preventing attacks and said reforms had "not come from pressures from the quartet or any state within it."

Abbas complained that Israel had not allowed the Palestinian interior minister to visit the Tel Aviv suicide bomber's home town of Tulkarm in the West Bank to investigate, but promised an unrelenting drive to track down the culprits.

Ratcheting up pressure on Syria, which Washington accuses of harboring militants, Rice cited what she called "firm evidence" the Islamic Jihad group that claimed responsibility for the Tel Aviv bombing had helped plan it from Damascus.

"And so the Syrians have a lot to answer for," Rice told US-based ABC News.

Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, whose country was not represented at the London talks, attacked Abbas for trying to win the cooperation of Palestinian militants, not crush them.

"I am very sorry the Palestinian leadership is still hesitating over its need to fight terror," Shalom said.

"It has to be clear that as long as they don't take the strategic decision to dismantle terrorist infrastructure, we cannot truly advance toward peace," he told Israeli army radio.

The London meeting, attended by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan as well as Arab and European foreign ministers, told Israelis and Palestinians they must both meet their obligations under the road map, long stalled by violence. *Reuters*

Syria set to pull out troops from Lebanon

BEIRUT—Syrian President Bashar al-Assad said Syrian troops might pull out of Lebanon in the next few months, as Lebanese protesters rallied in central Beirut on Tuesday demanding Syria get out of their country.

Syria, which has 14,000 troops in Lebanon, has come under increasing pressure as a result of demonstrations following the assassination last month of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri.

"It (withdrawal) should be very soon and maybe in the next few months. Not after that," Assad said an interview conducted on Monday and published by Time magazine on its website on Tuesday.

"I could not say we could do it in two months because I have not had the meeting with the army people. They may say it will take six months," he added.

Two weeks of unprecedented protests forced the pro-Syrian government of Prime Minister Omar Karami to quit on Monday, leaving officials with a complex search for a new head of government.

Assad would not give a definite timetable for pulling out his army, saying it depended on technical rather than political considerations.

Syria has recently said it is willing to redeploy its troops to the Bekaa Valley near the border in line with the Taif agreement that ended Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war.

Damascus also faces growing international pressure. The United States has accused Damascus of assisting anti-US insurgents in Iraq and backing anti-Israeli Palestinian militants as well as meddling in Lebanon.

Assad's remarks indicated for the first time that Syria was considering a quick total withdrawal from its neighbor—as stipulated by a UN resolution and demanded by the United States and France.

The Taif Accord called for a redeployment of Syrian troops to eastern Lebanon, followed by agreement on a timetable for a full withdrawal.

"You need to prepare when you bring your army back to your country. You need to prepare where you will put the troops," Assad said.

He said security in Lebanon and the protection of Syria's own borders needed to be taken into consideration.

AL-ASSAD

One influential US senator said a withdrawal in "a few months" as suggested by Assad might not be acceptable to the international community.

"The world community is going to insist upon a rather rapid acceleration of that timetable," Richard Lugar, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, told reporters after a meeting with US President George W. Bush.

Karami said before his resignation that a hasty Syrian troop withdrawal could plunge Lebanon back into civil strife.

Market fears of a political vacuum put the Lebanese pound under intense pressure, forcing the central bank to dig into its foreign exchange reserves to defend the currency.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice welcomed what she called moves to restore democracy in Lebanon.

"Events in Lebanon are moving in a very important direction," she said in London. "The Lebanese people are starting to express their aspirations for democracy... This is something that we support very much."

Rice and French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier repeated calls for Syria to withdraw its troops from Lebanon.

Washington and Paris, co-sponsors of Security Council resolution 1559 demanding an end to foreign interference in Lebanon, called for general elections planned for May to be free and fair and suggested international assistance.

A few hundred protesters returned to Beirut's central Martyrs' Square on Tuesday where thousands celebrated the resignation of Karami's government a day before.

They vowed to keep up their protests until Syrian troops leave the country. *Reuters*

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INCB: Drug menace spreading through Asia Pacific

BANGKOK — Drug-traffickers bent on eluding crackdowns are forging new smuggling routes and production labs in Asia Pacific and putting the region at increased risk from stimulants and heroin, the International Narcotics Control Board said Wednesday.

Intense efforts by authorities in Burma (also known as Myanmar), the region's top heroin producer, and neighbor China to eradicate drug production and distribution have helped prompt the shift, with significant increases in drug seizures, particularly methamphetamines, in countries from Malaysia to Fiji.

"The illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and abuse of amphetamine-type stimulants, especially methamphetamine, remain a major concern in East and Southeast Asia," the Vienna-based INCB said in its report for 2004.

"Most of the countries in East and Southeast Asia, including China, Japan, Malaysia, Burma, the Philippines and the Republic of Korea, reported a significant increase in the total amount of amphetamine-type stimulants seized in 2003."

High seizure numbers continued into 2004, along with the shock discovery and dismantling in June of the region's largest clandestine methamphetamine lab ever uncovered, in Fiji, and another major production facility in Malaysia, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), an INCB collaborator.

"There are new developments in the spread of the illicit manufacture of methamphetamines," Akira Fujino, the UNODC's representative for East Asia and the Pacific, told reporters in the Thai capital to mark the report's release.

He said the region's lengthy coastlines and the relative ease of setting up clandestine laboratories is facilitating the spread of methamphetamine production from traditional manufacturing zones such as Burma and exposing Asia-Pacific countries to the scourge.

"Those countries can be very vulnerable," Fujino said.

Asia now accounts for more than two thirds of the world's amphetamine users, and nearly 90 percent of all methamphetamine seizures in the world take place in East and Southeast Asia, according to the report.

It also said landlocked Laos and neighbor Cambodia have emerged as key transit countries for traffickers, particularly due to successful interdiction in Thailand.

The drug trafficking and anti-drug efforts in Southeast Asia can be likened to a balloon, which bulges out on one side when pressure is applied to the other, Fujino said.

"Trafficking of heroin from Myanmar, from the Golden Triangle (connecting Laos, Myanmar and Thailand) continues, and when Thai authorities tighten controls then trafficking through Cambodia, Vietnam, and those neighboring countries emerges and extends further."

Regional production of heroin continued to decline in 2004, according to the INCB, with the total area under illicit opium cultivation in Burma—the world's number two heroin producer after Afghanistan—reduced by 28 percent, to 44,200 hectares.

Production of opium, the raw source of heroin, in number three producer Laos dropped by 45 percent in 2004 to 6,600 hectares, the report said.

Asia Pacific remains at heightened risk of heroin trafficking and abuse, however, as traffickers in Afghanistan are seeking new markets and transit routes for their record heroin production.

"There is now concern of possible trafficking of Afghan heroin not only to Europe and the rest of the (Western) world but also to this part of the world," Fujino said. *AFP*

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US abolishes death penalty for minors

WASHINGTON—The US Supreme Court on Tuesday abolished the death penalty for those convicted of crimes committed as minors, removing the United States from a short list of countries allowing the practice.

America's highest court upheld an earlier ruling by the Missouri Supreme Court banning the execution of people convicted of crimes they committed before turning 18.

That ruling had found execution to be in violation of the constitutional protection against "cruel and unusual punishment."

The ruling was cheered by rights groups and death penalty abolitionists and is likely to be welcomed by the families of 72 juvenile offenders currently on death row.

"Now, the US can proudly remove its name from the embarrassing list of human rights violators that includes China, Iran and Pakistan, nations that still execute juvenile offenders," Amnesty International said in a statement following the ruling.

The court had ruled in 1988 that the execution of offenders who were younger than 16 when they committed their crimes was unconstitutional, but a few US states—including Alabama and Texas—still allowed execution for perpetrators of crimes committed at 16 or 17.

The Supreme Court considered the case of Christopher Simmons, condemned to death for the 1993 murder in Missouri of a woman who was abducted, tied up and thrown to her death from a bridge. He was 17 at the time.

Simmons' attorney, Seth Waxman, had argued that the death penalty was a useless deterrent for minors, since "they weigh risks differently" than adults do.

"The overwhelming weight of international opinion against the juvenile death penalty is not controlling here, but provides respected and significant confirmation for the court's determination that the penalty is disproportionate punishment for offenders under 18," read part of the decision. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Car bombs kill 10 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—Ten people were killed and dozens wounded when suicide car bombers attacked an Iraqi army base and a checkpoint in Baghdad on Wednesday, security and hospital officials said. At least seven people were killed and 30 wounded when the bomb blew up outside the army base in western Baghdad, hospital officials said. Would-be recruits and soldiers were lined up by the entrance to the base at the disused Al-Muthanna airport when a white Toyota Corolla sped to the gates and exploded, eyewitnesses said. "As he arrived, he blew himself up. Two soldiers were lifted up into the air and knocked across the street," said eyewitness Hussein Mohammed, who was 20 meters away when the car exploded. The blast left five damaged cars in the street, and streaks of blood stained the ground. *AFP*

French reporter begs for life

BAGHDAD—A French journalist missing in Iraq for almost two months has made a desperate appeal for her life as the leading candidate to head the country's next government met with Kurdish leaders to bolster his position. "I am French. I am a journalist with Liberation. Please help me. My health is very bad. I'm very bad psychologically also," pleaded Florence Aubenas in English on an undated video obtained by AFP in Iraq. These were the first images of the 43-year-old correspondent for the left-leaning newspaper Liberation after disappearing with her Iraqi translator and fixer Hussein Hanun al-Saadi from her Baghdad hotel on Jan. 5. *AFP*

No death penalty for Bashir

JAKARTA—Indonesian Muslim cleric Abu Bakar Bashir, accused of leading a regional militant group blamed for deadly bombings, is likely once again to escape a tough sentence even if he is found guilty at the end of his second terrorism trial on Thursday. Prosecutors have struggled to prove that Bashir, by virtue of his alleged leadership of the al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiyah group, was involved in the 2002 Bali bombings and another attack on the Jakarta Marriott hotel the following year. But few see the case they put forward as convincing. Prosecutors have already dropped the main charge, which could theoretically carry the death penalty, that Bashir and his supporters planned the bombings. Instead they sought an eight-year sentence—arguing he had failed, as head of the organization, to prevent Jemaah Islamiyah militants from carrying out terror attacks. *AFP*

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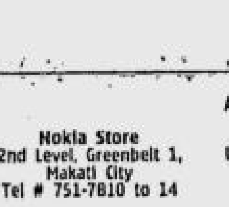
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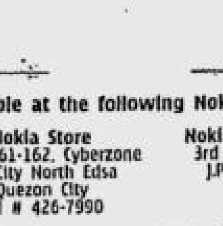
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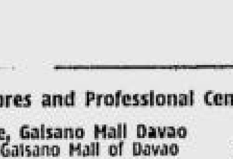
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Overdue review

EDITORIAL

LAME-DUCK Energy Secretary Vince Perez, who can afford to ruffle feathers now that he's bowing out of the government service, has convened a group to review the Oil Deregulation Law. He has, for what it's worth, the rhetorical backing of President Macapagal-Arroyo. The committee has 90 days to study the law and make recommendations to the President.

Perez himself has indicated what sort of things the committee may look into, with the hope of giving useful suggestions. Foremost among the matters that deserve scrutiny are the oil companies' price adjustments. Consumer-oriented groups, such as the Consumer and Oil Price Watch, have questioned the justification of the increases, the latest of which amounted to a 60-centavo increase in the pump prices of gasoline and 50 for diesel. In addition, Perez has, on more than one occasion, bewailed the inability of his department to punish gasoline station owners caught overcharging customers. The law, as it stands, has allowed deregulation without adequate supervision.

No one in his right mind wants a return to the 1980s, when every oil price increase triggered massive street rallies and political unrest. No one with his feet planted firmly in reality is advocating a repeal of the law of supply and demand, either. A deregulated market, however, should foster competition in the interest of the consumer, but instead, as consumer groups have pointed out, the country is increasingly at the mercy of a virtual oil cartel.

In the past, the government used Petron as a foil to foreign oil companies. Since deregulation and the privatization of Petron, the company has joined the ranks of the big oil players. Players that have joined forces with the smaller oil companies to unilaterally, and jointly, decide oil prices as a group. In the face of the concerted action of the oil companies, both the public and the government have been reduced to impotence.

What are the government's alternatives? Heavy regulation is unwieldy, but unfettered deregulation is a recipe for obscene corporate profits at the expense of the entire economy. In these difficult times, it appears that the only endlessly profitable enterprises are fast-food outlets and gasoline stations. After all, people always need to eat, and in the modern age, people always need to use gas. The question is whether gas companies and station owners should have free rein to charge what they will.

We repeat that the intention of the Oil Deregulation Law was to promote competition to benefit the consumer. After a year or two of token competition, all pretenses at competition between the oil companies ceased. Instead of responding directly to the needs of consumers, the oil companies have required state guarantees and the intervention of the President to balance the requirements of the world market with their effects on local consumers.

The Filipino people are fed up with price-fixing and gouging gas station operators as well as the government's inability to do more than slap them with token fines. Perez energetically took it upon himself to swoop down on profiteering gas stations, but those were merely morale-boosting, cosmetic, actions. No energy secretary should be devoting time to "padlocking" gas pumps with stickers; he should be behind his desk doing work with an industry-wide scope.

This early, Ms Arroyo and Perez should assure the public that once the committee evaluates the law, swift action would follow. In particular, the President's party leadership should already be mobilizing to ensure the smooth drafting and passage of amendments to the law. We cannot afford to have reforms recommended, only to end up stillborn in Congress yet again. Political will is the only antidote to the millions of reasons oil companies bulging with cash can put in the way of much-needed remedial legislation.

Coordination

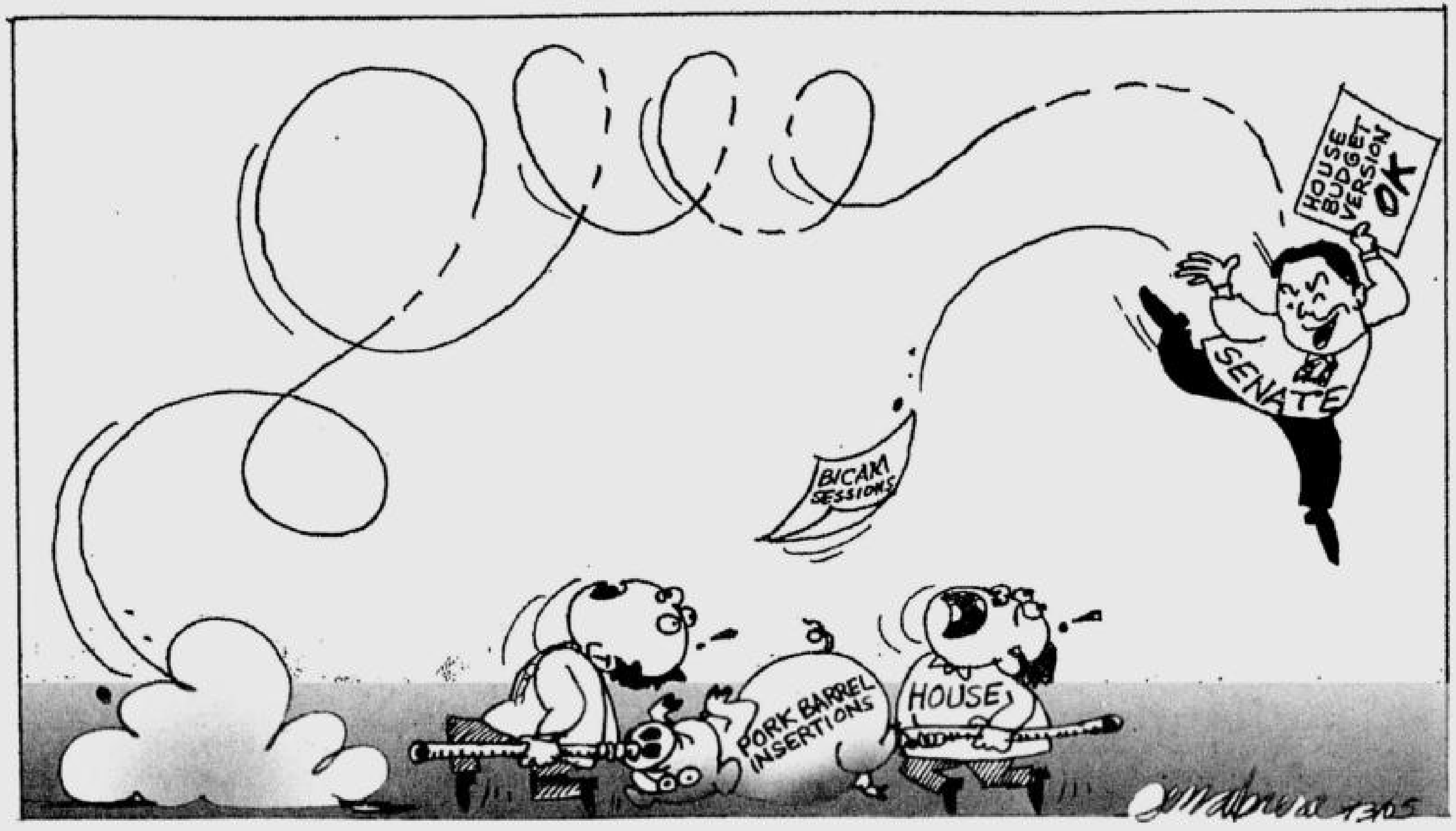
FOREIGN COMMENT

TO ENGAGE in diplomacy with North Korea is to court exasperation. That has long been the experience of America, which found that Pyongyang had used a bilateral agreement of 1994 as a cover to pursue its nuclear weapons ambitions.

It is now the turn of China, which is hosting six-power talks aimed at thwarting those ambitions, to have its patience tested.

The six powers say they have the same goal, that of a nuclear-free peninsula, but varying perspectives mean that progress is snail-like. Christopher Hill, the American envoy to the stalled talks, emphasized the importance of a co-ordinated approach. Until that is achieved, the wily North Koreans will continue to play on their interlocutors' differences.

Daily Telegraph (London)



Del-Norte-Del-Sur virus

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

IN CONGRESS, when the end of their term approaches, some legislators' fancies skid toward "chop-chop," street jargon for the 1812 tactic of splintering election districts and saving political hides.

In lieu of "chop-chop," political scientists use "gerrymandering"—derived from Massachusetts Gov. Elbridge Gerry who redrew a salamander-like district to favor his party.

Our most visible "chop-chop" artists are three representatives whose terms are ending. They'd split Cebu, a province of 3.35 million people, jammed within 5,088 eroded square kilometers, into three. That opens for them governorships.

This virus has erupted also in Bukidnon, Surigao del Norte and Quezon. But congressmen who relish publicity duck whenever gerrymandering is raised.

Rep. Clavel Martinez zippers her lips on House Bill 3657. It'd spin off her district into "Cebu del Norte." Rep. Antonio Yapha swore he didn't file anything, until reporters trotted out his HB 3632 which would create an "Occidental Cebu." Rep. Filemon Kinatanar claimed he hadn't read HB 3733. *"Makapal kasi."* It's thick. But 12 of of his 15 mayors thumbed down a "Cebu del Sur."

Reaction has been ballistic. If Cebu's four other districts were also "chop-chopped," religious leaders, businessmen and newspapers asked, would seven provincial capitols be wedged into one island? That'd need seven sets of officials, from governors, vice governors, provincial health officers, treasurers, assessors, agriculturists, prosecutors to superintendents, fire chiefs and janitors.

Europe, Asean and other bodies are moving toward integration, former Finance Secretary—and Cebuano—Jesus Estanislao pointed out.

A fragmented Cebu would resemble Siquijor, warned Cebu Daily News' Fernando Fajardo. In this one-district province, 69.5 percent of the 2003 budget go for salaries. Maintenance and operating expenses chew up the rest, noted Fajardo's column, "New provinces or new leeches?" Nothing is left for investment.

"How about a Cebu del Mar?" cracked Visayas Deputy Speaker Raul del Mar to cheer a glum congressional coffee clutch. Del Mar's solid track record makes his reelection sure. "No one laughed," he ruefully recalled. "Bad joke?"

Bukidnon has its "bad joke" in HB 3312. While Rep. Nereus Acosta was a world fellow at Yale University, Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri sneaked in an "Act Creating the Province of Bukidnon del Sur." Zubiri would lop off 10 from Bukidnon's 20 towns and two cities into a Del Sur dependency. Without a by-your-leave, Zubiri swept in Kalilangan and Pangantucan from Acosta's district.

"Why not a Bukidnon Oriental and Occidental?" a fuming Acosta told the Central Mindanao Newswatch. The far larger Pangasinan and Pampanga are not fragmenting. "This is sheer gerrymandering for political gain."

That's happening, too, on Dinagat Island, off Surigao del Norte. One policeman and 17 Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association members were killed during a gun battle with a joint police-military force that arrested "Supreme President" Ruben Ecleo Jr. for the murder of his wife Alona.

"Politics and religion combined into a potent, if not deadly, brew in the Ecleo family's fiefdom," writes Marites Daguilan-Vitug in the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism book "Faith, Hope and Politics." Today, the PBMA "boasts an even bigger and more fanatical following."

"An Act Creating the Province of Dinagat Island" (HB 884) gives local ayatollahs elbow room. Its author is Rep. Glenda Ecleo, mother of the "Supreme President" who is out on a million-peso bail. In Congress, one member scratches the back of others, so HB 884 has 42 co-authors, including Speaker Jose de Venecia.

HB 2862 would slice off a "Quezon del Sur" from the original province of 1.72 million people living in 40 towns and Lucena City. It would have 22 municipalities and Gumaca as capital.

The mother province would be renamed, what else? "Quezon del Norte." But all four Quezon congressmen—Proceso Alcala, Rafael Nantes, Danilo Suarez and Lorenzo Tañada III—signed on.

Except for local differences, all bills are word-for-word copies of a legal form. If any part is declared unconstitutional, a clause decrees other provisions remain in effect.

Thus, few will bother with the US Supreme Court's recent 5-to-4 decision upholding boundaries of Pennsylvania districts amid charges of "unconstitutional political gerrymandering."

Redistricting was a political matter, Justices Rehnquist, O'Connor, Scalia, Kennedy and Thomas held. That's beyond the court's purview. But courts must step in when the maps of political districts would put one party at an advantage over the other, Justices Stevens, Souter, Ginsburg and Breyer insisted.

But the court never explained what the standard was for fracturing the Constitution, The New York Times notes. "Since then, no challenge to partisan gerrymandering has ever been successful."

Here, the brawl will be over cash. Expenses for Quezon's mandatory plebiscite are to be charged against unexpended Comelec funds. The Bukidnon bill is silent. Does it assume the incumbent governor, Jose Ma. Zubiri, will pay for Junior?

Charge Surigao del Norte, Dinagat suggests. The Barbers there always murmured to PBMA leaders: "Thy will be done." But Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia snaps: "I'll veto any appropriation for such a foolish exercise in Cebu."

As the virus festers, former Gov. Emilio Osmeña snorts: "If my grandfather (President Sergio Osmeña) were alive, he'd have asked: *Na buang mo?* Have you gone bonkers?"

* * *

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Then and now

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I LOVED the part in "The Aviator" where Leonardo DiCaprio's Howard Hughes goes to a hearing on his movie "The Outlaw" by the Motion Picture Association Censorship Board. The board head argues that "The Outlaw" does not deserve their seal of approval because it shows Jane Russell's "prominent mammaries shockingly uncovered," which could "appeal only to prurient interest." In response, DiCaprio/Hughes proceeds to unveil several blow-ups of women's breasts partly exposed, which appeared in pictures that had the board's seal of approval. He asks a mathematician to demonstrate that Russell's breasts are no more prominent or shockingly exposed than the others. He gets his movie passed.

If I were a movie producer or magazine publisher, I'd do a similar thing at the House committee hearings on the anti-smut bills. Except that in lieu of photographs of partially exposed women's breasts, I'd bring photographs of titillating scenes from old movies. These photographs will consist of a man and woman kissing, of women wearing one-piece or even two-piece bathing suits, and men and women dancing "the latest craze." I don't know what expert I'd bring to demonstrate that these scenes were the most shocking thing in their time, as shocking as some scenes of disrobing and simulated sex are today. I won't need an expert to show that what was shocking then is completely acceptable, even tame, today.

One of the things that do not get much attention in debates about pornography is the changing of taste or the evolution of convention. The least pernicious of the bills that would presumably scuttle smut, Manuel Zamora's, which calls for the prohibition of the publication of lewd photographs and sex stories in tabloids and broadsheets, argues that "press freedom does not entail publishing materials that are offensive to society's moral standards." Seemingly simple and forthright, that is really a most convoluted proposition. The head of the pin upon which it rests is the phrase "society's moral standards."

At the very least, that isn't one neat package, in this country more than others, which is rived by many divides. There is no single "society's moral standards." There are the standards of the various ethnic groups, there are the standards of the cities and the provinces, there are the standards of artists and priests, there are the standards of Muslims and Christians, there are the standards of different groups within the dominant Catholic majority. The very essence of democracy is precisely toleration, specifically the toleration of the minority viewpoint.

Indeed, the very essence of art—which is why it is the first to be swept in the path of anti-smut—is to challenge "society's moral standards," or its most conservative expressions. To hold up a mirror to society and show its warts. That can be very offensive to the so-called "pillars of society." Henrik Ibsen's plays were. They were received with much bile by Victorian society, exploding as they did their myths, chief of them male superiority, veiled in bourgeois custom and tradition, as in "A Doll's House." Ibsen was repeatedly called immoral and subversive, and his play, "Ghosts," which told of an ostensibly upright family ruined by infidelity and venereal disease, was banned for some time by Norwegian authorities. Yet Ibsen is considered by modern dramatists today as fairly conservative, compared for example to August Strindberg.

Which brings us to the point about the changing of taste and evolution of convention. What was immoral and subversive yesterday are the convention and orthodoxy of today. The first kiss in movies might have been the most shocking thing for movie audiences, but the screen kiss is pretty much par for the course today—even the French variety. I recall that in the Catholic school I went to during my childhood, James Bond movies were spoken of as a one-way ticket to hell. That was **not** because they treated women like bimbos, that was because they showed women as Adam might have seen Eve at a moment of revelation.

Yet you watch old James Bond movies—there is only one James Bond, and he is Sean Connery—and titillation will not be the first thing you'll feel at the sight of the women there. Vast amusement is—at their idea of skimpy clothing.

The same is true of the Sampaguita vamp or moll, the one with the cigarette on one hand and whisky on the other, sitting on a stool in a skirt raised provocatively above one knee. Had these things been censored then—and there were efforts to do so by society's "watchdogs," more defined by their doggishness than watchfulness—we would still be living in that time.

Indeed, I still remember how it was when women first began wearing mini-skirts, a most inspired idea in women's fashion along with the bare midriff. You could hear the weeping and gnashing of teeth among the pious from here to Aparri. An item in the newspapers that told of an incident in a jeepney where a man thrown in a state of agitation plunged his face on a mini-skirted girl's lap was blown out of proportion. It typified, the stern, frown-wearing patriarchs said, the oppressive effects of the thing on men's equanimity. It was—a refrain that would be echoed again and again in the general context of anti-smut campaigns—an invitation to rape and other sex crimes.

These days, the miniskirt no more entices unduly concupiscent eyes than does the lack of any frontal covering on the women of indigenous groups.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, as they say. And concepts of beauty do change, from women of luxurious build to leaner ones. So does ugliness. Prissiness reflects more on the qualities of the beholder than the beheld.

Scrutinizing the Senate surprise

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THERE ought to be inter-chamber courtesy in Congress, but there's also inter-chamber *silipan* as to the why and wherefore of each other's actions. Now House members are still talking about the first-ever approval *in toto* by the Senate of the national budget presented by the House over two months earlier, without waiting for the bicameral conference committee to meet. The Senate version would have involved a smaller budget, but that's now moot and academic.

What did it? Was it the presidential broadside two days ago aimed at Congress for the long delay and the threat of a twice-reenacted budget? Could be, except that the President had issued many appeals before for the passage of revenue measures she needs badly, but it inspired neither fear nor sympathy in the senators' hearts.

* * *

Some House members suspect it was the impact of Sen. Panfilo Lacson's recent exposé before a civic group that his colleagues had cut P1.3 billion in intelligence funds from the executive branch, only to realign it to their own pork barrel allocations. Lacson implied a big *moro-moro,* and one has to give it to him for having the guts to make it public—he must be the most unpopular senator around. Some House members suspect that the senators made the surprise move in order to grab headlines away from the Lacson exposé and so that the matter wouldn't be raked up in the conference committee. What made them suspicious was the fact that it was a multi-partisan move, which was also unprecedented. Why, even rabid oppositionist Sen. Aquilino Pimentel was extolling it! The senators lost no time proclaiming the virtues of their united action over radio and TV all day yesterday, but it will take time to erase that Lacson exposé.

* * *

At the party that new Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina's family threw for friends and associates last week after his induction into office, everyone wished him good luck. "You need every bit of it," his guests told him. Australian business executive Peter Wallace, upon hearing that Lina had accepted the job, asked him if he had "suicidal tendencies." At the party, Lina's 23-year-old daughter Sheila, a graduate of entertainment marketing from New York, sang with the Manila Symphony Orchestra, which receives support from the Lina family. Her song was "Children Will Listen," which the witch sang in the play "Into the Woods."

Indeed, everyone is searching for the answers to several questions: Why did Lina, a low-profile but highly successful businessman for the past 31 years (he chaired Airfreight 21, the RP licensee of Federal Express for 21 years) agree to join the government in that very difficult post? Would he really divest his business interests? How does he propose to raise badly needed revenues?

* * *

Lina's appointment was generally met with approval since it was widely believed that few people could pull tricks on him since he knows the ropes in Customs. But the questions persist. Lina said his divestment is for real and this can easily be judged from the hefty capital gains tax he's paying. He said he's letting go of all his businesses "except those that don't have anything to do with Customs" such as Lina Farms, to be run by his wife Sylvia.

Why did he join the government? It's payback time, he says, given the enormous success of his businesses in past decades. In the twilight months of the Marcos regime, Bert, unknown to many, was funding a lot of the anti-Marcos rallies where his kid brother Joey was the principal barker. Joey advised Bert and Sylvia to move their family to the United States as the situation here was becoming quite bad. But they decided to commit themselves here, no matter what happened. "Today it's the same call to duty to country," he told Customs personnel.

* * *

Interestingly, new Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, who was given a free hand by the President to choose his team, asked Lina one day to join him for breakfast. The purpose: to ask his help to convince BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno, who used to be his co-chair in the Lina Group, to stay. Not only did Parayno agree to stay, "*natangay pa ako sa* Customs," Lina said. He recalled that a few years back, GMA asked him to "lend" Parayno to her at the BIR. Lina was then tasked to talk to Parayno's wife Alice so that she would not oppose it. This time it was Parayno who had to talk to Sylvia to let Bert take the Customs job. Sylvia, however, had already heard a news leak over radio and the four of them went out to dinner to talk about their ironic situation. But former Local Government Secretary Joey Lina, who's now president and general manager of the Manila Hotel, was not too keen about letting Bert accept the job, since he knew what a government post entailed, although he had no serious objections.

* * *

I queried Lina how he would handle the fabled lifestyle of some people at Customs. I'll tackle that, he says, but his first and foremost task is to improve revenue collections, through such measures as scrutinizing closely the documents of bonded warehouses. In this regard, he says he will continue the "tagline" he adopted as a private citizen chairing the local franchise of FedEx: "We live to deliver." Except that now he lives to deliver for his bureau, the finance chief who is his immediate boss, and the President. Lina says this delivery has to be carried out in today's highly globalized and competitive world where the Philippines has to be very attractive to investors, and part of being attractive is to level the playing field for business. The first three goals he wants to achieve is "re-energizing" the people, streamlining operations via computerization and "less paper," and "re-engineering systems and procedures." He needs plenty of luck.

TV discombobulation

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THE INQUIRER'S editorial two days ago dwelled on Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman's warning to parents that excess television viewing by children could stunt their creativity and skills.

Nakakabobo (It dumbs). It numbs. Too much TV affects reading skills and seriously inhibits left-brain functions needed for oral and verbal activities. The right brain becomes more dominant and thus makes zombies of TV addicts.

That may sound like an exaggeration, but try parking yourself in front of the TV the whole day for no urgent reason (urgent would be the stimulating 9/11 or the tsunami updates) and your brain just leaves you. The packs of junk food also vanishes in front of you.

Compare this with reading, which makes your mind active and your imagination fly. Compare this with activities such as designing, problem-solving or writing. Writing may be a solitary activity, but it does not bring on the loneliness of the long-distance runner. The writer is not really alone. There is a whole caboodle of characters that are alive, ideas and stories playing themselves out in the writer's brain. And then the images in the landscape of the mind translates into words and these words go to one's fingers and to the computer screen and finally to the printed page. Later, to be absorbed by other minds.

Of course, there is a time to turn it all off, to go to the garden and coax the plants to grow or eat good food and sip coffee with friends.

Television may look like it has everything. For many, it is their daily source of information. Indeed television contains a lot, but what kind of information and how much of it is truly information?

Some years ago I wrote about something I had read in a book (I didn't get it from TV) which was about the information that we are missing out. I want to share this again.

When many people in this world thought we were having a surfeit of information, information gatherers, information providers, information managers and what-have-you, and we were up to here with the electronic media, one writer set out to find out what exactly was happening outside and inside of him in the context of all this information tsunami.

Bill MacKibben did this and the result of his extraordinary effort was the book "The Age of Missing Information." (He also wrote the celebrated "The End of Nature.")

One day, McKibben sat in front of his TV to find an answer to the question, "Does having access to more information than ever mean that we know more than ever?" McKibben watched a single day's TV programs on all 93 cable stations in Fairfax, Virginia. He taped some 2,000 hours of shows and then watched them all.

MacKibben chose Fairfax because of the astounding size of the cable system there: five Christian channels, four for shopping, two for country music video, one for plane arrivals and departures. A cable magazine listed nearly 1,000 movies per month. There were two comedy channels, nine public access and government channels, two for weather, one for sports, name it.

"On a single day," wrote McKibben, "you can hear about virtually every topic on earth." He watched "endless newscasts and hyperactive game shows, bizarre sporting events, infomercials for devices with unknown uses, helpful hints for bass fishermen, cheetahs dispatching zebras, evangelists begging for dollars, and more episodes of 'The Brady Bunch' than a sane man could bear."

To discover what was missing in what he saw on TV, McKibben spent 24 hours—only 24—on top of an Adirondack mountain. He watched insects and vultures, climbed trees, even swam in an ice cold pond. And he listened.

There, on that mountaintop, McKibben discovered many things about himself and the world around him. He was able to gather information that was not offered by the boob tube.

McKibben's expedition was not that of a dabbler or dilettante who had nothing better to do. In "The Age of Missing Information," he seriously and with great humor dissects the information in those 2,000 hours of videotape. His observations are both hilarious and sobering. And he also writes so very well.

But it is the mountaintop lessons that are timeless and precious. "The idea of standing under the stars and feeling how small you are—that's not a television idea. Everything on television tells you the opposite—you're the most important person, that people are all that matter. 'We do it all for you'; 'Have it your way,' the immortal 'This Bud's for you.' The endless parade of jesters to entertain you, the obsequious newscasts that bring the story you want to see right to your living room. It's what you want—'The consumer is our God' (said) the chairman of the MTV Network."

(Incidentally, some of these issues were discussed at the "Media Nation 2: Owning Up" conference in Tagaytay last month.)

It is not true, McKibben says, that we live in an age of information or that there is an information explosion/revolution. In many ways the opposite is true, he says. "We live at a moment of deep ignorance, when vital knowledge that humans have always possessed about who we are and where we live seems beyond our reach… An age of missing information."

The star culture and the hard sell of excessive glamour and glitter that our local television networks promote have only added glaze to the eyes of star-struck TV junkies and to their dumbing, numbing and discombobulation. To prevent blood coagulation, don't tune in to the early morning chatter on free TV.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Backgrounder to Mindanao

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

TOMAS Cabili, delegate from Lanao, did not sign the 1935 Constitution. During the convention, he had worked for Mindanao to have the right to vote for its own representatives, who up to then were appointed by the governor-general. According to Delegate Jose Aruego, who later wrote the definitive account of the convention, Cabili was convinced that "the province of Lanao—except Sulu and Cotobato—should have been permitted by constitutional provision to have its… representatives elected by the direct vote of the people."

And so it was that when the Constitution was presented to the voters, one of the three major groups to oppose it were the leaders from Lanao, Cotobato and Sulu.

Sovereignty over Mindanao had been negotiated—then enforced, through the invention of the .45-caliber revolver, among other things—by the Americans during several campaigns distinct from the war which had destroyed the First Philippine Republic. Maj. Gen. Elwell Otis, commander of the US Army forces quelling the "Philippine insurrection," had ordered Gen. John C. Bates to negotiate a treaty with Sultan Jamalul Kiram of Jolo, which he did, successfully. What came to be called the Bates Treaty was signed on Aug. 20, 1899. The English text read: "The sovereignty of the United States over the whole archipelago of Jolo and its dependencies is declared and acknowledged," while the "rights and dignities of His Highness the Sultan and his datos shall be fully respected"; and Americans would not interfere "on account of their religion." Problems arose when it turned out that the Tausug version showed the sultan had not relinquished sovereignty.

When the Americans began exercising what they felt to be their sovereignty—by establishing the "Moro Province" in 1903, among other things—there was war, which added luster to the careers of military men like Leonard Wood and John Pershing and resulted in several bloody campaigns, culminating in the Muslims' final acceptance of US sovereignty in 1915 (the Carpenter-Kiram Treaty).

While all this was going on, Filipinos could only fret over what might be a separate accommodation with the Moros. Teodoro M. Kalaw, for one, filed a bill in the Philippine Assembly in 1910 which "disapproved the dismemberment of Philippine territory until such a time as the American Congress could define the real political status of the Philippines." This came at a time when there had already been four major Muslim uprisings.

The fear that the Americans would dispose of Mindanao as they pleased since they had waged a separate campaign to subdue it refused to go away. It actually increased, particularly during the term of that old Moro-subduer, Wood, as governor-general. Even as Filipino officials had a fit over Wood's thoroughly Republican plan to "run the government out of business," Kalaw wrote: "There was also talk of separating from the Philippine archipelago the island of Mindanao, and subsequently Americanizing it." The American chamber of commerce of Mindanao and Sulu even sent a telegram to President Calvin Coolidge proposing Mindanao's conversion to an unorganized territory under the American flag.

Matters came to a head when in 1922 Republican Rep. Robert L. Bacon filed a bill seeking to separate Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan from the jurisdiction of the Philippine government and establish a separate government in those areas directly under American sovereignty. The first bill lapsed, and he filed it again during the next session, on the grounds that "the Moros are essentially a different race from the Filipinos, that for hundreds of years there has existed bitter racial and religious hatred between the two and that complete union of the Filipinos under one government is distasteful to the Moros, who would prefer a continuance of American sovereignty."

Mass meetings were held in Manila to denounce the Bacon bill. The Philippine Legislature condemned the bill. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, from his retirement, sent a telegram to Coolidge asking him to reject it. The brouhaha died down, but Bacon's justification for his bill would rankle in the memory of Filipino leaders.

Hence the conviction of the leaders in the 1930s that the Muslims had to be dealt with firmly, if the interests of the nation they were building were to prevail. This was, at best, a confrontational attitude—"us" against "them." The Muslims were viewed as half-savage children who needed firm disciplining and tutelage—concepts which used to irritate Filipino leaders when they had begun to agitate for autonomy.

The end result can all the more be seen as internal colonialism. Flooding Mindanao with Christian settlers—the way Americans flooded the Midwest in the United States—became one of the most effective ways of ensuring that the island would remain in the republic. By the 1950s, Muslim leaders like Domocao Alonto had become familiar fixtures in national politics, but still the leader from Mindanao who would rise the highest prior to the Marcos years was Emmanuel Pelaez, a Christian. The gradual extension of voting and other rights to the Muslims was accompanied by the gradual rise of Muslim politicians who played the game, Manila-style, or at least in the fashion adopted by provincial Christian warlords who had private armies. The supreme example of this new breed of Muslim leader was Ali Dimaporo.

The leaders who played politics Christian-style, whether those from the old ruling families or people like Dimaporo, represent a partial success for the colonial-style policies of Filipino leaders. But while this style of co-optation may have been suited to the first half of the 20h century, it has begun to display serious limitations over the past 30 years.

Gifted child

YOUNG BLOOD

Alida Fay Santos

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I AM a 21-year-old kid who barely knows anything about the world, and that's why I find it funny that people tease me about being a "gifted child." I guess it's because I entered school early, graduated from college at age 18, worked even before I graduated, and served more than one of this country's top officials. Now I work as an officer of one of the most popular commercial centers in the country. But much as I would want to talk about my accomplishments, or my experiences or the people I've worked with, I'd rather talk about the pains and struggles of being a "gifted child" so-called.

My problem has always been that everyone seems to expect too much from me, from when I was a child, to when I was in school and now that I have a job. Again I'm 21, but I'm expected to stay home on weekends, go straight home after work, call my mom every hour if I go out with my friends or even my cousins. I cannot stay out beyond midnight, and I have to give the phone numbers of all my friends to my mom so that she can check if I'm really with them. In other words, I'm expected to be a kid and an adult at the same time.

I suppose this is the problem of many kids, or at least that's what I want to believe to keep my sanity intact. I often cry, feeling confused, hurt and lost. Sometimes taking my own life doesn't look like a bad idea, like when I was going through a period of depression a year ago.

When you look at me, you won't see even a trace of loneliness, sadness or misery. I am a cheerful kid, always in high spirits when there are people around. But not a day passes when I would not wish that someone would take me away and soothe the pain.

When my dad died last year, I lost the only guy who treated me right. I was his baby, his smart kid, his favorite badminton player.

He was my favorite person. He loved me more than I loved myself. He understood me like no one else could. And he was my coach not just in badminton but in life.

Just like me, my dad went through hell and came back (though I haven't come back since I think I'm still in hell at the moment), but he never lost his sense of humor. I suppose that was what kept him sane until the day the Lord took him away.

I have hit rock bottom, and maybe there is no other way for me to go but up. I remember what Rachel of the TV series "Friends" said when Joey asked about how she felt when Ross came back with a new girl from China, "You know rock bottom. That's 50 feet of crap and there is me right below it." I feel like I am right where she was: under 50 feet of crap, without a way out.

Being a kid, I still need guidance, I still need help. What I don't need are higher expectations, complaints about what I have become, and words that hurt. I may be smart, I may be brave, I may have what it takes to go places, but I am still a kid.

Many youngsters nowadays claim to be mature, independent and that they could be on their own. Well, I could be if I wanted to. But it's hard and I'm struggling. I want a piece of chocolate to cheer me up, a toy to make me jump in delight, and a kiss from my mom at the end of the day to make me feel loved and secure to face life the next morning.

Alida Fay Santos, 21, works for a mall chain, and also partly owns a salon and a preschool in Metro Manila.

Mind games

Karen Eustaquio

I WANT to have the power to read people's minds. That's what I'd ask, if a magician ever came up to me and asked what supernatural power I'd like to have.

Imagine how much time and effort I would save if I knew right away what other people were thinking! If I had that knowledge, I would always end up a winner.

You see, the problem with the world today is that people never say what they're thinking or how they're feeling. And paranoid people like myself spend half of our lives analyzing every little word or smile or gesture as if they were precious clues that would help us solve the great love mystery, only to find out in the end that these were put on display precisely to mislead us. People like doing that.

Love is like a game of chess; it's mostly mental. You put so much thinking into every move you make, careful not to make a mistake. You are both trying to impress the other and feeling threatened at the same time. You want to think it's a game where you can have fun but at the same time you know it's serious. You always try to guess what the other person is thinking so you would know what to do next. It's all so pressure-filled and challenging at the same time and yet you find much pleasure in it. At the end of the day, as with all kinds of games, it ends with a determined winner and a dejected loser. All is fair in the game of love and war? I don't think so.

No matter how hard we deny it, we all want to be loved more than we love. I never believed love could ever be shared equally because one party or the other always ends up giving more. No matter how hard we try to hide it, we all want to be the ones to leave instead of being left behind. The ones who leave forget more easily and get on with their lives faster. I guess the ones who are left behind have only two humiliating choices: to run after the persons who left them or wait until they come back.

No matter how hard we try to hide it, we all want to be the ones being wooed than the ones making a great effort to win attention. There's this twisted pattern I have recently discovered among couples: At the start, a boy goes through hell to win the girl's heart. As soon as she says yes, the boy loses interest and the girl would be in hell and then come back, wishing she could have the old determined boy again.

Is it possible not to stay away from this game? I have figured that to avoid being a winner or a loser by being neutral, unaffected or indifferent is not a solution but a futile attempt at self-deception. Somehow the other person will be hurt by a love unrequited.

There's no solution to this love game—unless you can read minds. Then you would be lucky and you would always be a winner.

Karen Eustaquio, 20, is a 2nd year BS Management student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

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Empowering the communities

WHEN something bad happens, all that our government leaders can think of is pass a law or issue identification cards. It doesn't occur to them that law and order is what's needed, not more laws. But law and order is impossible to attain without a government by the people, for the people and of the people in every community. In other words, the Filipino people, the sovereign citizens, must be in control of the security and destiny of their own community, not just the few who are accountable to them.

In trying to contain terrorism, officials think of arms and armed operatives, the power of the gun versus the power of terror, government versus insurgents, those in power versus those desperate to be in power. Not wanting to let go of oligarchy, our officials take matters into their hands—"protecting" the people, acting as the state, fighting fire with fire, glorifying a Rodrigo Duterte or an Angelo Reyes or anyone with the temerity to declare war against unhappy Filipinos. No one seems to notice that even as laws keep piling up on the shelves, the situation keeps getting worse. Laws don't solve or prevent problems; people do.

The roster of wanted men fills only one poster. There are only a few terrorists; and they are surrounded by 84 million peace-loving Filipinos who know how to fight tyranny, criminality or corruption, given the chance.

To straighten out governance and establish law and order in their own communities, Filipinos must be empowered. Their empowerment is what the Local Government Code is all about. But no one pays attention to the code. Not even Sen. Aquilino Pimentel who claims to be the "Father of the Local Government Code."

Mostly, it's been the serial failure of interior secretaries—starting with Pimentel—that has prevented the people from taking control of their communities where criminals hide or ply their trade.

The code mandates all barangay residents to convene at least twice a year to deliberate on the affairs of their community and oversee its governance (Sections 397-398). Every barangay government is supposed to prepare and post an up-to-date list of all inhabitants, including information, such as place and date of birth of a resident, sex, civil status, citizenship, occupation and others (Section 394).

If this requirement of law were complied with, every single Filipino would be accounted for. It would be a simple matter of consolidating the lists in a computer and placing them online for anyone to access and pinpoint any culprit.

Even the Department of Interior and Local Government's Barangay Operations Office can do this at minimal cost, since barangays have funds for generating the list at source and issuing the IDs themselves. Why is this not being done, and what is Reyes doing about empowering the people so they can compel their officials to obey the laws?

—MANNY VALDEHUESA,
valdeman_esq@yahoo.com

Correct value of confiscated logs

THIS refers to the news item titled "DENR chief scored for erroneous data" which was written by Grace Cantal-Albasin and Aquiles Zonio (PDI, 2/3/05), obviously a follow-up story on the news item, "Get the big-time loggers" written by Michael Lim Ubac, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Delfin Mallari Jr. (PDI, 1/23/05) Please allow us to clarify the following:

1. It is totally baseless for Rodrigo Pupos to blame Environment Secretary Michael T. Defensor for the wrong estimate on the value of confiscated forest products.

2. I was not dismayed at the inclusion of Pupos' name in the "top illegal logging cases filed." I was dismayed at the reporters' wrongly putting the amount of illegal logs seized at P2.3 million. That amount already included moral and exemplary damages.

It was arrived at by multiplying the value of the confiscated 365 pieces of lauan lumber (9,538.13 board feet), which was P238,453.25, by 10 (to include moral and exemplary damages): thus, the P2,384,532.50. This amount was not bloated by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

—MAXIMO O. DICHOSO,
Ceso 4,
regional executive director,
Department of Environment
and Natural Resources-10,
Macabalan, Cagayan de Oro City

LETTERS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Are DVDs, VCDs priced too high?

THIS is in reaction to the letter of Noel Carpio (PDI, 2/12/05) regarding film (as well as music) piracy and why it flourishes in the Philippines.

Indeed, "people will look for cheaper alternatives" such as pirated films considering the peso's poor purchasing power, brought about by the "financial nightmare" we are in. There are other basic questions which need to be clarified though.

Why do movie tickets, original DVDs, VCDs and CDs cost so much? Is it because of high production cost? If so, what major components of the production cost are these? Perhaps, local artists are being paid exorbitantly such that they become instant millionaires at the expense of the adoring masses. Skyrocketing talent fees could be one major reason why this is so.

How come many of our local production outfits are able to sell original VCDs and CDs for as low as P150?

This baffles me: if, indeed, the majority of the masses are trooping to piracy stalls and not to movie houses and legitimate record outlets, how come many of our local artists still enjoy the life of a king or queen? How come many of our local singers still achieve platinum or gold in album sales? Are they in connivance with piracy syndicates?

—MICHAEL DANILO F. CUETO JR.,
70 Gonzalo Puyat St.,
Loyola Subdivision, Marikina City

MATB taken within the law

I DIDN'T think that the issue of my "unqualified-ness" for higher positions in the Department of Public Works and Highways (PDI, 2/11/05) would be raised by the illustrious and highly venerated INQUIRER columnist Solita Collas-Monsod herself.

I have never received "special treatment" of any sort in my quest for further accreditation. Normita Villanueva—the career executive service officer alluded to by Monsod in her column—can attest to this.

I did take the Management Aptitude Test Battery (MATB) alone in January 2003, but it was not something unusual. In fact, a member of the Career Executive Service Board and several officials of the Philippine National Police took their MATBs in the same manner. The fact that I took the examinations supposedly "out of season" was not illicit; they used to be conducted on a need basis.

The position of public works undersecretary entails round-the-clock availability. It is important that I should be reached anytime by the secretary in case of emergency. That was why I always carry my cell phone with me. The use of the calculator in the cell phone to answer the mathematics questions in the MATB was then allowed.

I did not use my cell phone for texting or calling for "outside intervention." Doing so would've been impractical and juvenile. The examination had to be finished within a specified period; there was simply no time to ask anybody for help, otherwise I would not have finished answering all the questions. Had I attempted to cheat, the proctor would've heard or seen it.

To my knowledge, as a policy, the CESB only mails test results; it never delivers them. So how could I have had my test results delivered on the examination day? I think Monsod needs to check with her sources again.

I commend Monsod for her outspoken and fearless attitude toward what she perceives to be wrong in the government. But it's also important that she looks at the other side of the coin.

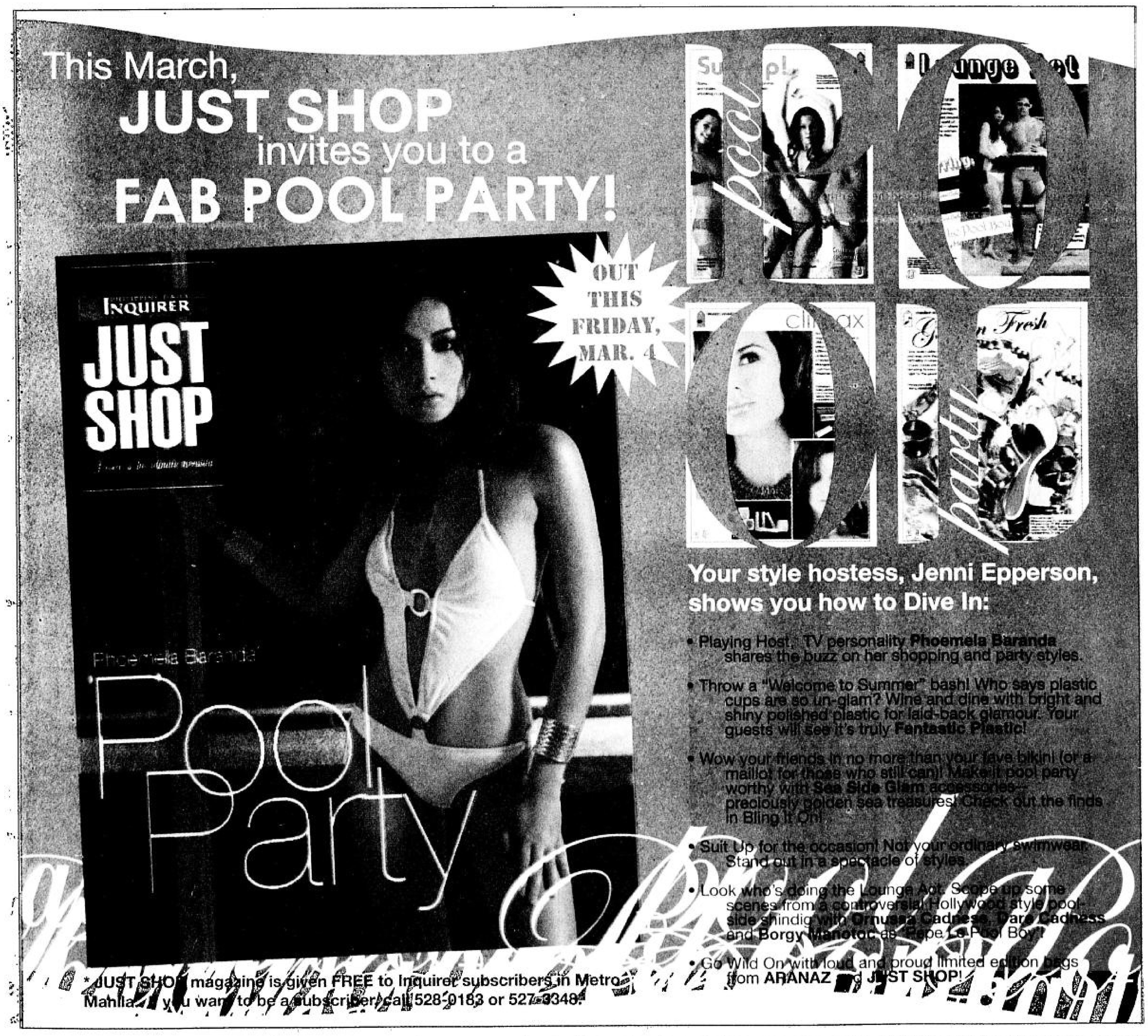
I would like to believe that I was designated as program director of the Mount Pinatubo Rehabilitation by then Secretary Jose de Jesus, and eventually as secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways by the President based on my performance and work ethic.

One of the problems in our society is its over emphasis on qualifications. Einstein, who revolutionized the way humanity views physics, failed the entrance exam to the Polytechnic Institute of Zurich. Capability cannot always be measured in numbers and scores.

I've been serving the DPWH and this country for the past 42 years. I rose from the ranks through blood and sweat. And I have never stopped thinking and working to improve the services of the government agency I work for.

Being a public servant goes beyond what some would see as "proper" qualifications. More important is the heart to seek the good and the will to overcome the bad.

—FLORANTE SORIQUEZ,
undersecretary,
Department of Public
Works and Highways,
Manila



Your style hostess, Jenni Epperson, shows you how to Dive In:

- Playing Host: TV personality **Phoemela Baranda** shares the buzz on her shopping and party styles.
- Throw a "Welcome to Summer" bash! Who says plastic cups are so un-glam? Wine and dine with bright and shiny polished plastic for laid-back glamour. Your guests will see it's truly **Fantastic Plastic!**
- Wow your friends in no more than your fave bikini (or a maillot for those who still can)! Make it pool party worthy with **Sea Side Glam** accessories—preciously golden sea treasures! Check out the finds in Bling It On!
- Suit Up for the occasion! Not your ordinary swimwear. Stand out in a spectacle of styles.
- Look who's doing the Lounge Act. Scope up some scenes from a controversial Hollywood style poolside shindig with **Ornussa Cadness, Dare Cadness** and **Borgy Manotoc** as "Pepe Le Pool Boy"!
- Go Wild On with loud and proud limited edition bags from **ARANAZ** and **JUST SHOP!**

*JUST SHOP magazine is given FREE to Inquirer subscribers in Metro Manila. If you want to be a subscriber, call 528-0183 or 527-3348.

INQBOX
Question of the Week
Do you believe former Congressman Dennis Roldan is involved in the kidnap for ransom of a 3-year-old Chinese-Filipino?
Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's **INQBOX** *wiL each receiv an *Inquirer Mug! U*
Win this *Inquirer mug
Key in: **inquirer box name/age/city/message.**
Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)
*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808.
Provincial winners can text:
inquirer ad name/city/mailing address
to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

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THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2005
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
A15

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Davao exemption from log ban urged

DAVAO CITY—House Majority Floorleader Prospero Nograles said he wanted the city to be exempted from the total log ban as its residents have been doing their part to preserve its natural resources.

"The assessment is that our region has done well in the preservation of forests and reforestation tree planting years back and we ought not to be punished for taking good care of our natural resources and environment," he said.

He said the city should even be emulated by other areas of the country for its efforts to conduct reforestation projects.

This came even as City Councilor Danilo Dayanghirang has called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to assess its order implementing the total log ban following the calamity that hit eastern Luzon last year.

Dayanghirang said the current log ban has greatly affected the lives of people who rely on the wood industry.

He noted that prices of wood products have increased due to the lack of raw materials, while more than 400 of his constituents working in the wood industry are apprehensive of losing their jobs because of the ban.

"We should look at the possible domino effect in terms of unemployment as well as the taxes that would be infused to the local government," he said.

Dayanghirang said the DENR must assess the areas where the log ban memorandum is needed to be implemented.

"Primarily affected by this order are those businessmen issued permits to cut. We do not have such business in the city, but what is happening is that end-users like sawmills and wood processing plants are affected," he said.

In Butuan City, officials of the wood industry in Caraga Region said about 23,000 wood workers were in danger of losing their jobs in the wake of the government's decision to suspend all logging operations in the country.

Malacañang has ordered the suspension on Dec. 8, shortly after the devastating floods that hit Aurora and Quezon provinces.

Felix Villacastin, president of the Labor and Management Practitioners Association for Regional Advancement (Lampara), said major industry players in the region are already feeling the effects of the two-month-old suspension of their logging activities.

He said losses incurred by the wood firms, which he did not name, were forcing them into closure.

"Wood industries could no longer cope operationally and have signified [intention] to shut down," Villacastin told the INQUIRER.

Antonio Antonio, executive vice president of Aras-asan Timber Co. (Artimco), which operates in Cagwait, Surigao del Sur, confirmed that his firm, like other companies, has no other option but to close shop and look for other investments.

"The two-month long suspension of legal logging was a bane to our operation. We're already losing," Antonio told the INQUIRER.

Villacastin said the government should immediately act to avert what he called the "social cost" of the suspension order.

Last month, at least 1,000 workers from all over the region staged a protest in a bid to convince Malacañang to lift the suspension and allow "legitimate" wood-processing firms to continue their operation.

Dubbed the Timber Corridor of the Philippines, Caraga is home to the biggest logging concessions and wood-based industries in the country.

Anthony Allada with reports from Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao

Ilocos now rid of fake medicines, says DOH

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—The top health official in the Ilocos said there were no more fake medicines being sold in the region, but warned that this could just be temporary and asked consumers to be vigilant.

"It's safe to say that today, there are no counterfeit drugs in the region. But drugstore owners could only have hidden the drugs because teams from the Department of Health are checking the medicines being sold," said Dr. Eduardo Janairo, Department of Health regional director.

In January, the regional DOH announced that based on the agency's random sampling, 80 percent of drugstores surveyed in the region were selling fake medicines.

Drugstore owners, according to the DOH, admitted that 80 percent of their merchandise were fake.

However, only nine drugstores in the region, five of them in Pangasinan, have been "shut down" due to the offense.

Janairo said these drugstores were caught selling fake drugs during the second phase of the DOH's drive against fake drugs.

"It was during the first phase when we found out that 80 percent of drugstores were selling counterfeit drugs. During the second phase, when we were closing down the erring pharmacy stores, most of them hid their supplies. [Drugstore owners] warned each other [of the impending inspection] through text messaging," he said.

There are 1,300 drugstores in the Ilocos, 780 of them in Pangasinan.

Janairo said the drugstore owners were aware that they were selling fake drugs because they bought their supply without demanding receipts or other documents. He said these fake medicines were cheap.

He cited a medicine brand, which is usually sold at P77 apiece, that drugstores buy at P10 each. He said drugstores sell it at P68 each.

"So the profit is more than 50 percent," Janairo said.

He said the DOH would announce the list of erring drugstores pending the results of the Bureau of Food and Drugs investigation.

He said the fake drugs have several classifications—those that are unregistered with the BFAD but have the right contents, those that have wrong contents (like orange juice and cornstarch), and those with wrong dosage (the package shows 500 milligrams but the content is only 200 mg).

MIGHT AFP
A soldier displays a recoilless rifle which he used during an assault on an Abu Sayyaf camp in Indanan, Sulu. The camp was taken over by government forces in a continuing offensive against the group that has links with the terror network al-Qaida.

Subic importers tell GMA: Don't kill us with duties

A GROUP of importers of second-hand vehicles based in Subic appealed to the Arroyo administration to cease pursuing moves that would kill the business of used vehicle importation.

In a press statement, the Motor Vehicles Importers Association (MVIA) said while it won a Court of Appeals ruling to continue importing used vehicles, President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent statement warning of increases in duties of imported used vehicles was a "clear signal that the administration is bent on protecting the interests of foreign car assemblers more than the rights of Filipino consumers."

"We urge the administration to exercise its powers in helping resolve economic-related issues and not to be totally biased and kill an otherwise consumer-friendly and fledgling enterprise such as car importation," the group said.

The MVIA added that should Ms Arroyo pursue higher duties on imported used cars, "it will not just be a death blow to our industry and enterprise, but also deny the consuming public its rights and opportunities to own affordable goods, such as second-hand cars."

"We still believe that we can convert this situation into an opportunity," said the group.

The MVIA and other importers expressed willingness to sit down with local car assemblers and government officials to hammer out a "win-win solution."

"We simply cannot close our eyes to the plight of the consuming public who really cannot afford to buy brand new vehicles and equipment," said the group.

Cops foil plan to burn GenSan mall

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police authorities said they foiled a plot to burn one of the major malls here after the discovery of three cellular phones that have been modified to trigger fire.

Chief Supt. Antonio Billones, police chief for Central Mindanao, said the mobile phones were found tucked in pockets of some garments on display at the Koronadal Commercial Center (KCC) Mall.

Billones said the smell of a burning wire triggered by the modified cellphone had alerted a saleslady at the mall's garments section.

"They are going high-tech. They are now using electronic devices to carry out their demonic plan," he said of the still unidentified suspects.

Police bomb experts are now studying the devices, according to Billones.

He said that inside the cellphones, police bomb experts found traces of still undetermined powder, which could be the incendiary material.

KCC had been rebuilt when a fire razed it on March 31, 2002.

Prior to the KCC incidents, three shopping malls were also burned.

Abu Sayyaf leaders Ustadz Noor Mohammad Umog, alias Abu Hamdi and Abu Muslim Al-gazhie, claimed responsibility for the past incidents.

Umog, who has since been arrested, has turned state witness against the terror group.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Pampanga gov loses 1st round of quarry battle

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

PAMPANGA Gov. Mark Lapid on Tuesday agreed to receive a business proposition on the quarry industry that his allies in the provincial board rejected in January after he faced the House committee on natural resources and four Pampanga legislators on Tuesday.

The refiling of the proposal by the Natural Resources Development Corp., which offered to be the collecting arm of the provincial government on quarry taxes, came toward the end of a three-hour hearing of the committee on natural resources.

Agusan del Norte Rep. Leovigildo Banaag, committee chair, gave NRDC president Angelito Salud at least 72 hours to submit a copy of the proposal to Pampanga board members.

The session ended with Banaag urging the board to deliberate on the "meritorious proposal" by putting "paramount interest" on the need of the province to generate more funds for development projects.

This, Banaag said, was the objective of House Resolution 267 that Pampanga Rep. Reynaldo Aquino filed in November last year.

"I hope you act sooner than later on it," Banaag told Lapid. The hearing resumes on March 16.

Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, President Macapagal-Arroyo's eldest son and who moved to have the NRDC's proposal refiled, asked Lapid and the board members to "give importance to the viability of the proposal."

Under the memorandum of agreement, which the board rejected on Jan. 24, the NRDC assured a net minimum guaranteed income of P36 million for the provincial government and another P36 million for the towns and villages from where the sand is derived.

The amount, if combined, is six times bigger from the P10.5 million the provincial government collected in 2004.

But Lapid, interviewed after the hearing, said he or his seven allies in the board did not lose in their common fight to make the provincial government retain control of the quarry industry.

"No one lost because we have a common intention, which is to increase the revenue for the province," Lapid said.

He was quick to point out that his acceptance of the copy of the proposal was "not an assurance" that he or the board would approve it.

He told the committee that he was "open to undergo negotiations with the NRDC."

Lapid followed the line of his father, former governor and now Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, that local governments have the exclusive right to collect taxes from local mineral resources like sand and gravel.

Earlier in the hearing, Arroyo put at least two board members under oath to say that they and their five colleagues struck down the proposal due to procedural issues and not because of opposition to the plan to tap the NRDC in the collection work.

The seven board members, in a position paper, said they felt that the NRDC, through its chair Victor Corpus, and Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao "railroaded" the proposal.

It was the committee vice chair, Sorsogon Rep. Jose Solis, who observed inconsistency in the position of the board.

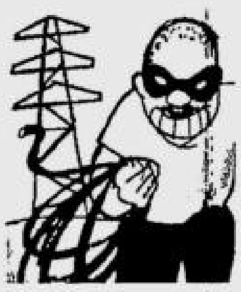
ROUNDUP

Local official falls

MANGALDAN, Pangasinan—Police arrested Councilor Jessie de Guzman and two other men on Thursday on charges of illegal possession of firearms. Supt. Fidel Posadas, Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division chief, said they had been receiving complaints that De Guzman had been using a seized 9 mm pistol, two .45 cal. pistols and a .32 cal. pistol to shoot indiscriminately when he is drunk. Two other suspects, identified as Jojo Moulic Jr. and Raul Esteban, were believed to be involved in drug pushing. Seized from them were several guns and bullets.

Eric Montoya, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Thieves steal wires



HERMOSA, Bataan—Thieves cannibalized the steel towers of the National Transmission Corp. in the towns of Abucay, Orion and Limay and took P100,000 worth of electrical wires. Beng Carolino, Transco Bataan information officer, said steel transmission towers of the National Power Corp., taken over by Transco, are mostly located in ricefields. Carolino said they were coordinating with the police in monitoring junk shops in the province that continued to buy stolen electrical wires. *Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

2 dead in collision

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Two persons died when the motorcycle they were riding smashed into the back of a parked truck along the national highway in Barangay Bacungan, 23 km from the city proper. Rose de Jesus, 42, died on the spot while her husband Noemi, 45, was rushed to Ospital ng Palawan, where he died minutes later. PO1 Sonny Miranda, police investigator, said Noemi, who was driving the motorcycle, may not have noticed the parked truck because it had no lights.

Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Soldier shot in ambush

LEGAZPI CITY—Five unidentified armed men on Thursday ambushed a soldier who was in a motorcycle in Sitio Maimbong, Barangay Caranan, Pasacao, Camarines Sur. A report received by Maj. Gen. Ricardo Nobleza said Sgt. Hermil Mellalos, of the Army's 42nd Infantry Battalion, suffered three bullet wounds in the leg. He was brought to Mother Seton Hospital and was transferred to Bicol Medical Center.

Jed Ll. Bacason, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Man, kid found dead

DUMAGUETE CITY—A father and his two-year-old daughter were found dead on Feb. 20, hanging inside their room on Ballos Street in Barangay Boyco, Bayawan City, about 102 km south of here. A report reaching the Negros Oriental Provincial Police Office identified the fatalities as Allan Lubrico and his daughter Claire Ann. Allan's wife Christine worked abroad. Milagrosa Medel, Christine's mother, told the police that early on Feb. 20, the couple quarreled over the phone. The report did not indicate what triggered the fight. About 11 a.m. on that day, Medel found Allan and his daughter separately hanging on a rope inside their room.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

2 held for snatching

BACOLOD CITY—Two suspected snatchers on board a motorcycle were arrested on Feb. 23 when a taxi driven by a police asset bumped their vehicle shortly after they grabbed a bag on Galo-Lacson Streets here. The police said Jose Palao Barrientos, 40, and Francis David Mutuc, 41, both from Cebu, were allegedly behind the series of robberies in Bacolod. Their companion, identified only as Dennis, was able to escape. Wilma Pongyan said Dennis grabbed her bag but she resisted. The two grappled for the bag and Pongyan fell to the ground. Dennis took her bag and boarded the motorcycle. Francisco Edis Jr., a taxi driver, saw what happened and bumped the motorcycle. The three boarded a jeepney but PO2 Larry Moneva intercepted them.

Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Saudi traders pay visit to Mindanao after blasts

By Germelina Lacorte
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Barely three weeks after the Valentines Day bombing that rocked Davao, General Santos and Makati, 27 business executives from Saudi Arabia arrived in Mindanao to explore business opportunities in tourism, trade, and agribusiness.

Antonio Santos, chair of the Mindanao Business Council (MBC), said the Saudi visitors included business people engaged in recruiting foreign workers to Saudi Arabia, traders and investors engaged in manufacturing and contracting services, food processing, telecommunications and tourism.

"Since it is their first time to be here, we want them to see business opportunities that will make them decide to do business with us," Santos said.

Local business groups here opened a two-day "business encounter," which included business matching and networking sessions and a forum highlighting tourism, mining and food processing as potential investment areas in Mindanao, with the visiting Saudi businessmen.

"This only shows that we are still on top of the situation. The Saudis are very sensitive on matters like this (security threats). But the fact that they are here to look for business opportunities only shows that we're back on our feet just a few weeks after the incident," Romeo Serra, MBC vice chair, said.

Aside from the list of local incentives presented by the Davao City Investment Promotions Center (DCIPC) on the priority investment areas in the city, the visitors were also presented with the success stories of the Paglas Corp., which has an expanding banana plantation in Datu Paglas, Maguindanao and some parts of Lanao del Sur; and other foreign corporations which have been operating in Mindanao for years, among them, the Chiquita Unifruitti Philippines and the Agusan Mills.

"We hope that the trade mission will eventually lead to mutually beneficial business relationships with us and the Saudi businessmen," Santos said.

Heading the delegation were Philippine Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Bahnarim Guinomla, Saudi Ambassador to the Philippines Mohammed Ahmin Wali, Philippine-Saudi Arabia Business Council President Waleed Al-Swaidan, Eastern Province Chamber of Commerce and Industry Secretary General Ibrahim Abdullah Al-Olayan, and Council of Saudi Chambers Assistant Secretary General for Foreign Affairs engineer Khalid Mohammed Al-Otaibi.

SHADOWING PANAGBENGA
EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
The shadows belong to pupils who prepared a gigantic mandala completely made of flowers during the celebration of Baguio City's Panagbenga Festival.

E. Samar inmates escape as guard buys food

TACLOBAN CITY—Four inmates on Sunday bolted the municipal jail of Dolores, Eastern Samar while the lone prison guard was out buying his dinner.

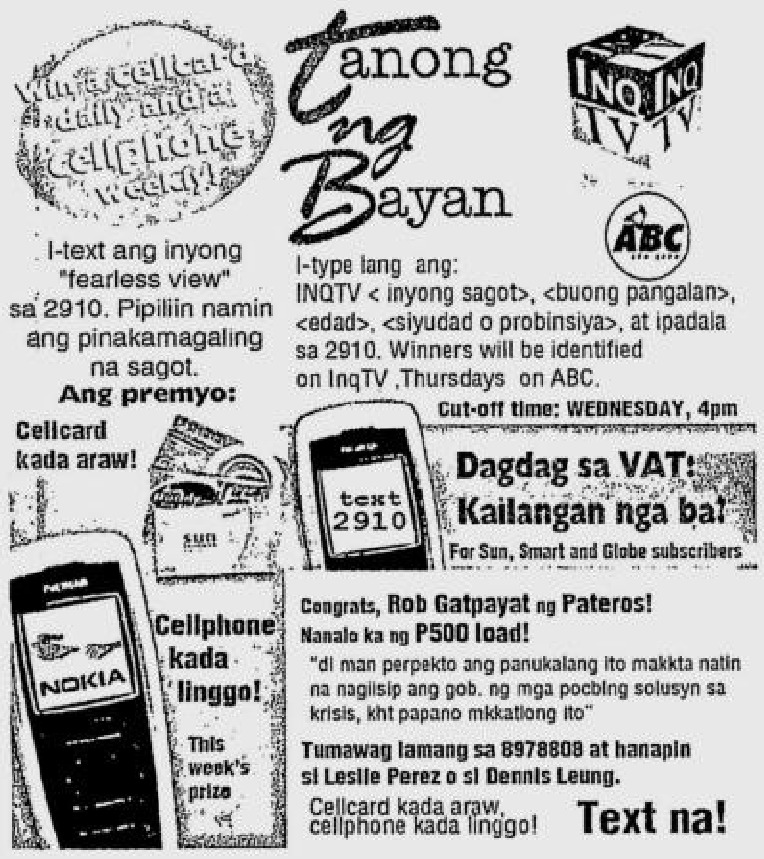
The prisoners—Edilberto Aquino, 30, and his brother Gerry, 23, Sammy Rapiz, 21, and Rufel Roncales, 19—were able to escape by destroying the padlock of their cell.

The escapees were all facing illegal possession of firearms charges and were all residents of Dolores, about 60 km from the provincial capital town of Borongan.

Jail Officer 2 Vilma Baquilod, provincial administrative and records custodian of the Bureau of Jail, Management and Penology, said the four prisoners escaped at around 6 p.m. shortly after JO3 Ian Oreta left the jail building to buy food.

Oreta was the only officer on duty at that time. He learned of the jailbreak only from the jail's five other prisoners who opted not to join the dash to freedom. The municipal jail is in Barangay Lunang, about a kilometer from the town proper.

Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone on Monday directed the BJMP to conduct an investigation. *Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*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Power from solar system fully energizes Capiz

By Felipe V. Celino
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—The province of Capiz, except for just two villages, is now fully energized.

Last Saturday, Rep. Fredenil Castro (Liberal Party) of Capiz's second district formally switched on the solar-powered electricity in the 21 upland barangays in Tapaz town.

Capiz is composed of two congressional districts. The first district, represented by Rep. Rodriguez Dadivas (LP) has long been fully energized by the Capiz Electric Cooperative (Capelco).

The upland villages of Tapaz have, however, remained without electricity because of the high cost of putting up electric lines along rugged terrain leading to these remote areas.

The ceremonial switch-on was held in Barangay Daang Sur, some 30 km from the town proper of Tapaz, which could only be reached on foot after 24 hours through a feeder road built by the provincial government a couple of years ago.

Castro and some local officials went to Daang Sur via motorcycles. It was the first time that Castro has reached the village.

The solar energy would benefit residents of Barangays Agpalali, Abangay, Acuña, Aglupacan, Bato-bato, Buri, Daang Sur, Daang Norte, Hilwan, Lahug, Mabini, Maliao, Minan, Nawayan, Rizal Norte, Rizal Sur, Siya, Tabon, Tacayan, Taganhin and Sinunod.

Residents of the area welcomed Castro's electrification program.

Jessie Gardose, a farmer of Daang Sur, said the first thing he thought upon hearing that electricity would reach them was to buy a karaoke system.

Other residents, however, favored buying TV sets to enable them to see their favorite political leaders and movie personalities whose voices they only hear over the airwaves prior to the electrification program.

Castro said the solar energy project would initially service 20 households in each barangay.

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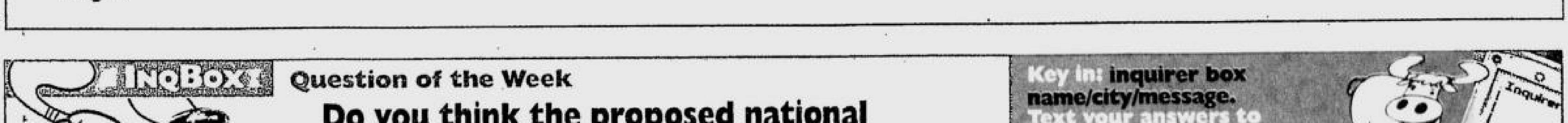
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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

'BALIKATAN-05'

From war games to civic projects

AMERICAN and Filipino soldiers rest their guns to work as masons and carpenters in putting up two school buildings in Luisiana, Laguna. DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Luisiana, Laguna

TO RESIDENTS of Barangay San Buenaventura in Luisiana, Laguna, the presence of American and Filipino soldiers is a welcome break from the monotony of daily activities.

Numbering at least 100, the soldiers worked hand-in-hand to finish a kilometer-long feeder road and two buildings inside the compound of the San Buenaventura National High School in the fifth-class municipality (annual income: P7 million-P13 million), 108 km south of Manila.

The American troops, in brown shirts and camouflage pants, and members of the Philippine contingent from the Army, Navy and Air Force—in their respective working suits—have temporarily left their war gear behind and rushed to meet tomorrow's construction deadline. They began the projects on Feb. 6.

Andrea Apaya, the school principal, was profuse with gratitude to the "humanitarian mission."

"The new classrooms will be a great help to our students. We really need new rooms," Apaya said. The school has only four rooms for more than 300 high school students.

"We can't afford to build new roads and school buildings. And now here come the military and (American) soldiers giving us what we need, why should we say no?" said Armando Taguilaso, barangay chair of San Buenaventura, 7 km from the town center.

"We need those projects for our students and our people. We should thank them instead," he said.

Taguilaso recalled that military officials and several Americans had been to their village several times, and it was in October that he was formally informed that San Buenaventura was chosen one of the sites of this year's "Balikatan-05." This time, the focus was on humanitarian and civic-action projects instead of the usual war games.

"We were only asked to level the hilly portion of the target site for the school building," Taguilaso said.

More than a kilometer away from the village proper, a group of Filipino and American soldiers was busy constructing a macadam road.

"It will help a lot for the easy transport of our farm produce to the market," Taguilaso said.

Partnership

The Balikatan (shoulder-to-shoulder) exercises are part of a yearly bilateral US-Philippine military training that aims to enhance coordination between the military forces of both countries in combat operations.

This year, 300 American and 677 Filipino soldiers are participating in 24 exercises, mostly medical missions in the towns of General Nakar, Infanta and Real in northern Quezon, which suffered the brunt of a series of typhoons late last year, and humanitarian projects in at least eight sites in the towns of Liliw, Magdalena, Cavinti, Majayjay, Luisiana and Siniloan in Laguna.

On Monday, Army Maj. Gen. Romeo Alamillo, Philippine director for Balikatan '05, and his American counterpart, Army Maj. Gen. Stephen Tom, deputy chief of the US Army's Pacific command, visited the Filipino and US soldiers working on the school building in San Buenaventura.

"This is not just a US project, this is a partnership (with the Philippine government) which we wish to continue and develop," Tom said.

Alamillo explained that military "inter-operability" should not only be interpreted in terms of war games and maneuvers. Even in building construction, the soldiers from the two countries can also "exchange styles and techniques," he stressed.

"They are learning from each other. This is the true essence of Balikatan," Alamillo said. He added: "There will be no war games here. Only humanitarian work."

Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, chief of the Philippine military's Southern Luzon command, said all security measures to protect the Balikatan participants had been put in place.

He said that even after the exercises, the military would continue what had already been launched in the chosen sites.

Amazing

US Army Capt. Kevin Serfass, a member of the Balikatan-05 information operation unit, said "the Philippines is as colorful as a movie. You have beautiful smiling people, rich land and verdant fields. Amazing sights."

Serfass, whose grandfather fought against the Japanese forces in the Philippines during World War II, also distributed plastic yoyos bearing the Balikatan logo to students in the village.

The US soldiers also held painting and slogan writing contests, and gave calculators and coloring books as prizes.

In northern Quezon, American and Filipino military doctors and nurses attended to at least 6,000 patients during a three-day medical mission in General Nakar, Infanta and Real.

"We're more than willing to accept all kinds of help to ease the sufferings of my people. We're lucky to be chosen as one of the recipients in this year's Balikatan," General Nakar Mayor Hernando Avellaneda said.

US Army Sgt. Alex Ricketts, a Filipino-American and native of Iriga City, said more than 1,500 patients were treated in General Nakar on Friday. A member of the US Army Civil Affairs Unit, he is a brother of movie action star Ronnie Ricketts.

Limited time

More than 3,000 people seeking medical help showed up in the tightly guarded Infanta Central Elementary School.

A group of US soldier-veterinarians was also present to attend to sick and injured animals.

"The next day, we will be in Real, hoping to attend to the medical needs of at least 1,500 residents in the area," Ricketts said.

He lamented the limited time to provide medical services.

"How I wish we could stay longer and give more. The hardest part of my job is how to break the information to those still waiting in line that they could no longer be treated because of lack of time," he said.

"The US military wants to assist the calamity victims. But we have to work within our time frame. From here, we have to go to Laguna and visit eight more places," he said.

The US troops are stationed at the Monte Vista Resort in Barangay Pansol in Calamba City in Laguna, the official operations center of the humanitarian mission.

THIS time, it's an exchange of working styles for American and Filipino soldiers working on the roof of a school building. DELFIN T. MALLARI JR.

Sagip Sanggol, Ligtas Pamilya

Lahat ay inaanyayahan na dumalo sa isang malaking pagtitipon ng mga naniniwala sa tunay na kahalagahan ng buhay.

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216 Filipinos detained in 1st round of Malaysia crackdown

From page A1

FIRST day of the crackdown on illegal migrants netted a total of 560 Filipinos and Indonesians, Malaysian authorities say. At a sawmill east of Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, immigration officials check the documents of foreign workers. AP

if they are allowed to return [to the Philippines]," Asuque said in the afternoon briefing.

The DFA said Tuesday it was prepared to hire Malaysian lawyers to help the undocumented Filipinos.

In Kuala Lumpur, the Associated Press reported that thousands of Filipinos, Indonesians and others working illegally in Malaysia went into hiding after authorities arrested at least 860 migrants on Tuesday, the first day of the crackdown.

The papers of nearly 4,500 migrant workers were checked Tuesday and 760 were taken into custody after being found to be illegal, the Star newspaper quoted immigration enforcement chief Ishak Mohamad as saying.

Most of those arrested were Indonesians and Filipinos, he said.

Up to half a million Filipinos live in Malaysia, many of them families of refugees who fled a separatist rebellion in Mindanao in the 1970s.

An estimated 200,000 are staying there illegally.

Suffering consequences

About 300,000 police, immigration officials and volunteers are taking part in the crackdown against an estimated half a million illegal workers still in Malaysia after a four-month amnesty for them to leave expired on Tuesday.

About 450,000—including around 68,000 Filipinos, per the DFA estimate—are believed to have left during the amnesty.

Those caught during the crackdown face fines, a jail term and caning before deportation, and are to be barred from ever coming back to Malaysia. Those who left during the amnesty are welcome to return once they have the proper documentation.

"We have postponed the operation to nab them several times," Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak told the Star. "Now that it has started, those who have not heeded our advice will suffer the consequences of their action."

Ishak, the immigration official, said teams would check hideouts of illegal migrants, including in forests.

"Due to the massive publicity on our preparations, they have deserted their colonies and settlements and gone into hiding," the New Straits Times quoted him as saying.

Border checks have also been tightened to prevent illegals from slipping into Thailand and returning later, officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

'Quiet arrangement'

In Manila, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the DFA had made a "quiet arrangement" with Malaysia for the "safe and orderly repatriation" of undocumented Filipinos.

"Unlike [in 2002] when they were rounded up by police and placed in detention areas in Kota Kinabalu, it's now being done in a safe and orderly manner," Ermita told reporters.

He said there was also an agreement between DFA officials and their Malaysian counterparts to conduct "continuing consultations" on the matter.

Ermita also said that the Philippine government had been informed about the crackdown in Malaysia well in advance, and that this was why many undocumented Filipinos were able to return home earlier.

Regularization

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the government had organized a team to facilitate the orderly repatriation of Filipinos from Malaysia.

He said the government was heartened to know that Malaysia was interested to legalize the stay of many undocumented Filipinos there.

In an interview over dzRB, Bunye said Malaysia was sending a team here to meet with the DFA and Department of Labor and Employment "to look at ways and means to facilitate the regularization of the continuous stay of our nationals."

The Malaysian team and the two departments are to finalize the mechanics that would hasten the process of regularization, he said.

Asked about President Macapagal-Arroyo's instructions to the Department of Social Welfare and Development on the matter, Bunye said the returning Filipinos could avail themselves of an alternative livelihood program set up by the DSWD in coordination with the DOLE and its allied agencies.

One-stop processing

Labor Undersecretary Manuel Imson said Malaysia would deploy its immigration personnel to assist Filipinos wanting to be rehired.

He said Malaysian immigration officers would be sent to the Philippine government's one-stop processing centers in Zamboanga City and Bongao, Tawi-Tawi, to help in the documentation.

Imson, who is serving as labor chief until Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas returns from an official trip to South Africa, said this was discussed during high-level talks between Filipino and Malaysian officials in Kuala Lumpur last month.

Rehiring

He said the Philippine mission, apart from promoting bilateral cooperation to resolve the migrant issue, also met with employers in Sabah for the rehire of Filipino migrants, especially those who had availed themselves of Malaysia's amnesty program.

According to Imson, the progress of the joint efforts to assist displaced migrants will be the focus of discussions at the first meeting of the Philippine-Malaysian Sub-Ministerial Joint Committee on Filipino Migrants, set in Manila on March 7. *Reports from Volt Contreras, Christine O. Avendaño, Jerome Aning, AP, AFP*

China, RP's new Big Brother, pledges military aid

From page A1

IT'S A DEAL: As far as Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo are concerned, the two countries' dispute over the Spratlys is settled as of Monday in Beijing. AP

Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao told visiting Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo on Tuesday that he hoped both countries would improve cooperation, Xinhua news agency reported.

Defense cooperation

Romulo on Tuesday ratified a memorandum of understanding on defense cooperation signed last November, an embassy official said.

"We in the Philippines welcome China's increasing role in regional and international affairs," Romulo said in a speech on Wednesday to mark the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

The Xinhua news agency quoted Romulo as saying that "disputes and conflicts [in the Spratlys] are all over now."

"The South China Sea, instead of a regional flash point, has been transformed into an area of cooperation, peace and development."

China, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam claim in whole or in part the oil-rich Spratly chain of islands and atolls in the South China Sea.

All the claimants, except Brunei, have troops stationed in the area and there have been deadly clashes in the past.

The most serious incident occurred in 1988 when Chinese and Vietnamese naval forces clashed at Johnson Reef, resulting in the deaths of 78 Vietnamese navy personnel.

Joint study

Last year, China and the Philippines agreed to carry out a joint study of the mineral reserves in the area, sparking concern from the other claimants.

Vietnam warned that the joint study could violate a 2002 code of conduct signed by the claimants to refrain from actions that could disturb the volatile peace on the islands.

But Romulo indicated that matters had been settled, saying that his comment on disputes and conflicts "refers not only to China and the Philippines, but also to others which claim the South China Sea territory."

Sino president to visit in April

He said Sino-Filipino ties were at an all-time high and stressed the priority of economic development in the region.

"If there are conflicts, whether in the South China Sea, the Korean peninsula or Taiwan Strait, it is important for the countries in the region to bind together to have meaningful dialogue," he was quoted as saying.

"If we can preserve peace in the region, therefore we can get on with economic development."

China exported its communist revolution to Asian neighbors, including the Philippines, in the 1960s, but bilateral relations have improved in recent years and Chinese President Hu Jintao plans to visit the Philippines in April.

China and the Philippines would hold a security dialogue in Manila as early as April, a diplomatic source said.

Landmark agreement

When President Macapagal-Arroyo visited Beijing last September, a landmark agreement was signed enabling national oil companies from both countries to conduct marine seismic tests near disputed islands in the South China Sea.

In January, a Philippine delegation, led by the environment and trade secretaries, held a mining road show in Beijing and said it had won investment pledges in nickel and other mining projects worth $1.3 billion.

The Philippines posted a trade surplus of $4.79 billion with China last year, with exports jumping 43.6 percent to $9.06 billion and imports surging 38 percent to $4.27 billion.

Thanks to Chinese technological support, the Philippines will attain rice and corn self-sufficiency by 2006 and 2010. *Reports from AFP and Reuters*

Hong Kong chief executive expected to quit next week

From page A1

REUTERS

UNPOPULAR Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa is on his way to Beijing on Wednesday presumably for further instructions. Many in Hong Kong reportedly cheered after the media reported his resignation.

lines and stories saying that unidentified "sources in Beijing" had confirmed that Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa had tendered his resignation and that it had been accepted.

But some of the reports disagreed about whether China's leadership wanted Tung to go. The Ming Pao Daily News reported that Chinese leaders asked Tung to stay on, but he insisted on quitting and they finally relented. The stated reason for resigning would be bad health, the paper said.

Lost faith

However, the Hong Kong Economic Journal—respected for its sober analysis—reported that Beijing lost faith in Tung's ability to lead the government and ensure greater stability in Hong Kong. The communist leadership thought it better for Tung to leave sooner than later, the paper said.

After Tung flew to Beijing on Wednesday for a series of meetings, he declined to directly address the reports of his resignation. "I know there are many questions you are concerned with, and I will make an announcement at an appropriate time," Tung told reporters.

Successor

The South China Morning Post reported that the No. 2 ranking official, Donald Tsang, would take over until a new leader was elected within six months. Tsang is a lifelong bureaucrat who—unlike Tung—has a reputation for being a savvy politician.

Tung has led Hong Kong since Britain returned the territory to Chinese rule in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula designed to give the city a wide degree of autonomy and limited democracy. He was elected by an 800-member committee loyal to Beijing.

The portly 67-year-old Tung, who sports a gray crew cut, is a millionaire scion of a Shanghai shipping family. Many believe his privileged background and career as an elite businessman have hindered his ability to connect with the common people.

Tung's many critics have accused him of mishandling major crises, including the 1997 Asian financial crisis that threw Hong Kong into recession and the 2003 outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which killed hundreds and ravaged the city's economy.

He has also resisted calls for greater democracy, including the freedom for voters to directly elect their leader and legislature. Twice in the past two years, half a million Hong Kongers have marched in the streets demanding more democracy.

There has been a steady flow of rumors in recent years that Tung would quit before his second five-year term ended in 2007. The speculation intensified this week when it was announced that Tung would join an elite advisory panel to the Chinese parliament.

Face-saving

It was also reported that Tung would soon be promoted to vice chair in the group, called the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The body convenes Thursday in Beijing, where each year it gathers about the same time as the Chinese legislature.

The theory was that Tung's status of vice chair would give him the ranking of a state leader in China's hierarchy. The promotion could be a face-saving way to remove him from his Hong Kong office.

Beneficial

Lee Kwok-keung, a CPPCC member from Hong Kong, told reporters it was still unclear whether Tung would resign. "But if the decision is true, I believe it will be beneficial to future development," he said.

The mass-market Apple Daily reported that Tung could resign as early as next week after his promotion to vice chair.

But earlier this week, several analysts doubted that Tung would quit, saying the move would increase instability just when things were settling down and the economy was proving.

Another CPPCC member from Hong Kong, Eric Li, told reporters that Hong Kongers would act rationally if Tung left. "I don't believe one person's departure will immediately create turmoil," he said.

Political reforms

One possible explanation for his resignation might be that it would trigger an election within the Beijing-backed 800-member committee, which would install a new leader who would serve a full five-year term.

This would help Beijing stall longer in dealing with growing public demands to make the currently scheduled 2007 election for Tung's replacement more democratic. Such political reforms could be put off until 2010. *AP*

RP flag in SanFo real but not original

From page A1

Francisco where he died in 1917.

Intriguing question

Asercion then asked: Could the forgotten Philippine flag in the display case be the same flag sewn by Marcela Agoncillo in 1898? Is this the mother or should we say grandmother of all Philippine flags?

Asercion shared his intriguing find with the Philippine consul in San Francisco as well as two visiting Philippine senators and an official of the National Historical Institute.

An inquiry was sent to Manila. In December 2004, Asercion was informed that based on his description and attached digital photographs, the flag was "most likely authentic."

Buko pie syndrome

How this flag became "the original" is best described as the "buko pie syndrome" where all buko pies sold in roadside stalls in Laguna all claim to be "the original buko pie."

Excitement over the flag can be attributed to an article that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle in February 2005 which was later reworked into an Associated Press dispatch stating that the flag was a work of art in need of preservation, and that unnamed "Philippine officials" inquired into the possibility of repatriating this relic.

Someone was even quoted as saying, it "does not take a Ph.D to know this [flag] is of astounding historical significance."

What history says

Textbook history states that Marcela Agoncillo made the first Philippine flag following the orders and sketch of Emilio Aguinaldo in May 1898. The flag was made in the Agoncillo home on 535 Morrison Hill, Hong Kong using "finest satin" bought from a store on Powell street.

Agoncillo was assisted by her eldest daughter Lorenza and Delfina Herbosa de Natividad, a niece of Jose Rizal. For five days they toiled, missing their customary *merienda* to insure that the sun and stars were handsewn correctly on the white equilateral triangle.

The flag was delivered to Aguinaldo before he sailed for the Philippines on May 19, 1898 on the US transport McCulloch. The flag was first used in the Battle of Alapan in May 1898 and later played an important role during the Declaration of Independence in Kawit on June 12, 1898 and the opening of the Malolos Congress in Barasoain in 1899.

The original flag was lost and it was suggested that General Funston took it as a souvenir following Aguinaldo's capture in 1901. Funston brought the flag back to the United States where following Asercion's assertion, it ended up in a display case in the San Francisco War Memorial Building.

Observations

With clear photographs of the San Francisco flag we can now make the following observations: First, both flags are made of satin, not cotton which is the usual material for flags.

Second, both flags resemble the present Philippine flag and have a blue field, red field, white equilateral triangle with a golden (or yellow) sun and three stars. The only difference is that early flags have a sun with a mythological face later omitted when Manuel Luis Quezon issued Executive Order No. 23 that standardized the design of the flag in 1936.

Third, the sun in the original flag was said to have eight rays, while the San Francisco one has 12.

Fourth, the original flag had five-pointed stars, while the SanFo flag has six-pointed stars resembling the Jewish "Star of David."

Fifth, the original flag had the sun and stars attached and sewn by hand, while the SanFo flag has painted sun and stars.

Sixth, the original flag had a plain dark blue field, while the SanFo flag has a printed blue field with a floral design.

Based on these observations, there is no need for further physical examination of the flag or historiographical inquiry.

The SanFo flag is indeed an authentic Philippine flag of the period, used during the Filipino-American War or later, brought back as a war trophy but it is definitely not the original Philippine flag of 1898.

Historical evidence

We would wish the SanFo flag is indeed the long lost original Philippine flag made by Marcela Agoncillo in May 1898 that witnessed the declaration of Independence in Kawit on June 12, 1898 and the opening of the Malolos Congress in 1899. We wish the SanFo flag is the same flag that saw action in battles against the Spaniards and also against the Americans, but unfortunately the historical evidence leads us to conclude otherwise.

* * *

Comments are welcome at oded@i-next.net

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Text us your feedback: inquirer met name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) *Editor* **Ester G. Dipasupil** ■ *Assistant Editor* **Cenon B. Bibe Jr.**

DOJ docus to show Roldan lived it up

By Armand N. Nocum, Luige A. del Puerto and DJ Yap

SUSPECTED kidnap gang leader Dennis Roldan had allegedly lived beyond his means, and at one time lost about a hundred million pesos in a Las Vegas casino, according to reports reaching the Department of Justice.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said an informant was set to give him "supporting documents" showing that Roldan and his alleged lover, Suzette Wang, had gone to Las Vegas and lost money there.

Gonzalez declined to name the source of his information; nor did he give details about where and when Roldan incurred the losses.

"The informant told me he was with the girl (Wang)," he said, adding that the informant was set to turn over to him travel documents and tickets as proof.

"It proves that he was spending money beyond his means," Gonzalez said, adding that this could serve as a "circumstantial evidence" in the kidnapping case to be filed against Roldan, Wang and six others accused of kidnapping a three-year-old boy last month. Although he admitted that the information about the hundred million losses was "raw," he said the informant "is very credible."

Roldan, an actor and former congressman, and the six other suspects are now detained at the headquarters of the Police Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) team in Camp Crame. Yesterday, Roldan had petitioned a Quezon City court seeking his release from what his lawyer Siegfried Fortun called a case of illegal detention and arrest.

Gonzalez, however, said Roldan was not being held against his will because he had signed a waiver to be detained at the camp in the presence of his other lawyer, Salvador Panelo. He added that they are opposed to the *habeas corpus* petition because "Dennis Roldan is a high flight risk."

The DOJ had taken over the case from the Philippine National Police last Tuesday.

Gonzalez also clarified that Wang could not be a state witness in the case. "If she is the most guilty, she cannot be a state witness," he said.

Meanwhile, Teresita Ang See of the Citizens Action Against Crime (CAAC) said yesterday that the CAAC and the Yu couple, parents of the victim, would oppose moves to place Wang under the witness protection program.

"The evidence can stand on its own without Suzette. Personally, I wouldn't approve it. The degree of betrayal hurts," she said, referring to Wang, a Filipino-Chinese national who is a friend of the kidnap victim's mother. It was Wang who allegedly picked the victim and had identified him to the other members of the alleged kidnap gang.

"She does not need to be a state witness because the evidence against Roldan is so strong. There is no iota of doubt," she said, adding that Wang had sent word to her about being taken off the case and serving as a state witness.

"The suspects should be charged with kidnapping. They had done something wrong. They should pay for it," she said.

Meanwhile, an arrest warrant against Wang would be issued anytime soon, said Police Director Robert Delfin, Pacer team head. Wang is already in the Bureau of Immigration's watch list and under police surveillance.

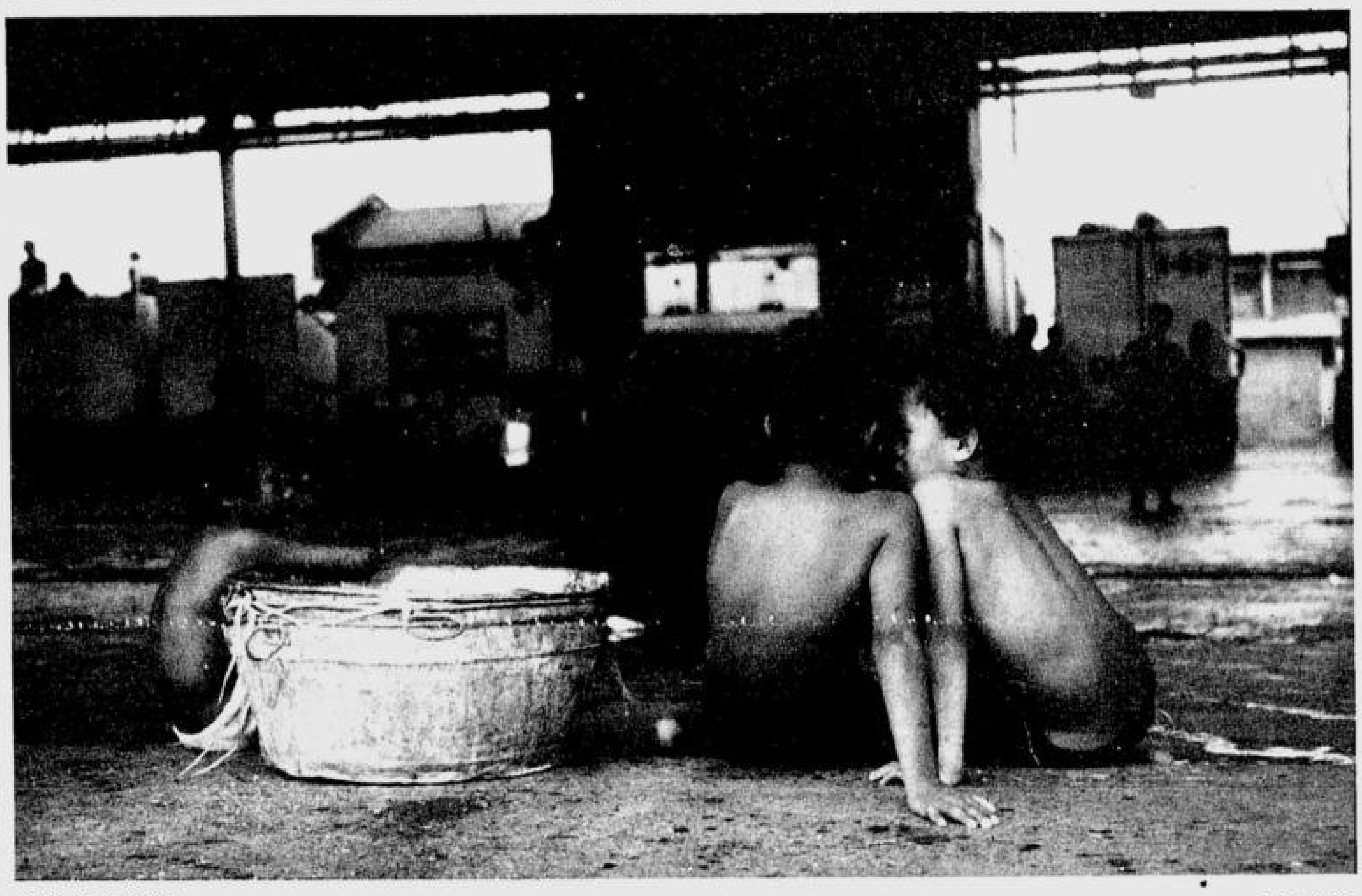
On Tuesday, Pacer and the Yu family held a case conference on the kidnapping charge. A case conference determines the strength of police evidence, and assesses strategies to be used in prosecuting suspects in court.

Reached for comment, Roldan's lawyer, Salvador Panelo, said the battle is over "in favor of his client," adding that the police "have absolutely no evidence against Roldan."

Fortun, on the other hand, said the only legal hold the government had in detaining Roldan was a waiver he had signed relinquishing his right to sue his arresting officers by requesting a preliminary investigation on the case.

But since no formal charges had been filed, and no result had come out of the preliminary investigation, Roldan's detention could only be considered arbitrary arrest, said Fortun. No warrant had been issued for Roldan's arrest, but police said this was not needed since the arrest was part of a continuing operation.

ROLDAN


REM ZAMORA

QUIET TIME
Three boys take advantage of the lull in trading at the Navotas Fish Port by taking it easy and whiling away the time in the almost empty fish market.

Census, curfew in Parañaque village

By Nikko Dizon

THE MULTINATIONAL Village Homeowners Association (MVHA) in Parañaque City, assisted by local police, yesterday began conducting a census among its residents following a series of raids on alleged shabu laboratories in the subdivision.

"I believe this would be an effective way to solve the problem," MVHA president Felix Resuello told reporters, referring to the seeming inclination of drug syndicates to set up their laboratories in the village.

After consultations with residents, the association had passed board resolutions that would allow the taking of a census, as well as setting a 10 p.m. curfew for minors below 17 years old.

Resuello said all household members at the village, with ages 17 and above, would be issued an identification card after the census. The MVHA would be responsible for taking photographs of the residents for their IDs to ascertain the card bearer's identity, he added.

Resuello said the census and the ID cards would help the MVHA keep track of permanent residents and transients living in the village.

The five homes in the village housing suspected shabu laboratories were occupied by either Chinese and Taiwanese nationals since April 2003, the MVHA official added.

There are almost 1,000 homes in the subdivision, 30 percent of whom are occupied by transients.

Village manager Ethel Atutubo said that at the barangay summit held with Mayor Florencio Bernabe yesterday, it was agreed that the Multinational Village census could be replicated in all the city's barangays.

Village officials said the series of raids had also affected the value of their properties. Resuello said that in 2003, real estate prices had gone down from P6,500 from P7,500 per square meter.

MMDA revives 2 traffic schemes

By Tarra V. Quismundo

ENOUGH of the long lines.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has begun reimplementing the Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT) scheme and the No Contact Traffic Apprehension (NCTA) system to end the suffering of drivers claiming their confiscated licenses, said Angelito Vergel de Dios, MMDA Traffic Operations Center executive director.

"The drivers are having a hard time and there are so many of them that we see falling in line," said Vergel de Dios yesterday.

Restraining order

The two schemes were suspended last month after the court issued a 20-day restraining order against them.

Consequently, the MMDA had to resort to the old system of confiscating licenses and issuing traffic violation receipts or TVRs.

With the reimplementation of the MTT, the confiscation of licenses of traffic violators is stopped and motorists can again just pay fines at any Metrobank branch in the country.

Drivers who have yet to settle TVRs issued during the suspension of the two traffic schemes must still settle their fines at the MMDA redemption center in Makati City.

2 communist hit men tagged in ABS-CBN van burning

By Margaux C. Ortiz

TWO CONFESSED members of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) have been presented to media as among those who burned a television van of ABS-CBN in Mandaluyong City in January.

However, the presentation of Teodoro Fuentes, 20, and Jongkol Francisco, 21, were marked by flip-flopping statements.

Initially, during the presentation by the National Bureau of Investigation yesterday, Fuentes admitted he was the one who pushed the van's security guard to the ground and held him at gunpoint.

He even said, "*Nautusan lang po kami* (We were just following orders)."

Later, however, Fuentes retracted his statements before the media and explained his "confession" by saying that he became confused and fearful while facing the media.

On the other hand, Francisco, at first vehemently denied that he was a member of the RPA-ABB and that he was part of the arson team.

But after the press conference, he related to an ABS-CBN reporter how they had practiced burning a vehicle and how they later followed the network's OB (outside broadcast) van to a Petron gas station on Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong City.

Amid the flip-flop, at least three witnesses identified Fuentes and Francisco as among six to seven men who torched the P35-million ABS-CBN van at 4:30 a.m. last Jan. 11.

Fuentes was arrested by Marikina City policemen last week for a separate murder case.

NBI Special Action Unit chief Vicente de Guzman III said they arrested Francisco in his home in Cupang, Muntinlupa City, the other day.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said the crime was "uncharacteristically ABB," which was known more for assassinating political or law enforcement figures.

Wycoco said the NBI was digging deeper into the motive behind the van burning, adding that the bureau was questioning two other suspects in their custody.

In a press statement, the RPA-ABB denied that it had anything to do with the burning of the ABS-CBN van.

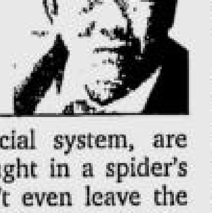
The statement signed by Miguel Guevarra, commanding officer of the group's Luzon Operational Command, accused the NBI of engaging in dirty tactics by trying to put the RPA-ABB in bad light.

However, it called the suspects in NBI custody as its comrades.

Judge trying a case already dropped

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



SOMETHING stinks in the decision of a Caloocan City judge to proceed with the trial of a theft case filed against two Australian contractors even after the prosecutors had withdrawn the complaint.

The Australians are engaged in a railway project. They were haled to court by a Filipino subcontractor whose services they hired to work on one phase of the railway project.

I don't want to talk about the merits of the case, but the prosecutors, who reviewed the decision of their peer to file the case in court, felt there was no reason to charge the Australians.

But the judge said no way would she allow the dropping of the case against the Australians. So, the theft case against them will continue.

Apparently, the Filipino subcontractor has friends in the right places in government.

And so, the Australians, strangers to the ways of the Philippine judicial system, are like the fly caught in a spider's web. They can't even leave the country as there is a hold-departure order for them.

The way the Australians are being treated by our judicial system has reached their embassy.

I heard that people at the Australian Embassy could only shake their heads in disgust.

I wonder what the Supreme Court can say about this?

***

Let's see what the Caloocan City prosecutors have to say about the judge's denial of their motion to drop the case against the Australians:

"We maintain that the evidence so far submitted by the complainant is still insufficient to engender a well-founded belief that a crime of theft has been committed and that the respondents are probably guilty thereof.

"Moreover, it is well to stress that while it is true that the dismissal of the case already filed in court rests [on] the sound discretion of the trial court, yet it should be emphasized that [a] motion for reconsideration is still part of the process in the preliminary investigation. The denial thereof is a reversible error as it constitutes a deprivation of the respondents' right to a full preliminary investigation preparatory to the filing of the information against them."

In short, Madame Judge, you have no right to hold the case for trial when the government—represented by the prosecutors—doesn't see any reason to prosecute the respondent Australians.

Bakit ka ba masyadong atat na atat na hawakan ang kaso?

***

Suspect Michael Castillo, 18, was taken before Antipolo, Rizal Prosecutor Emmanuel U. Pascual for inquest.

Castillo was brought before Pascual by complainants Antonio and Merlinda Anonuevo, husband and wife, and village guards. He was charged with trespassing and theft for entering the Anonuevo household in the middle of the night.

At Pascual's office, the suspect's mother, a pretty middle-aged woman, was also there to accompany her son.

Pascual asked if suspect Castillo had a job, and the mother said none. The inquest prosecutor then asked what the woman's job was, and the woman said she was a masseuse.

In front of both the complainants and the suspect, Pascual asked the suspect's mother to massage him.

Result: Suspect Castillo was released pending further investigation.

Obet seeks support for 'Botika'

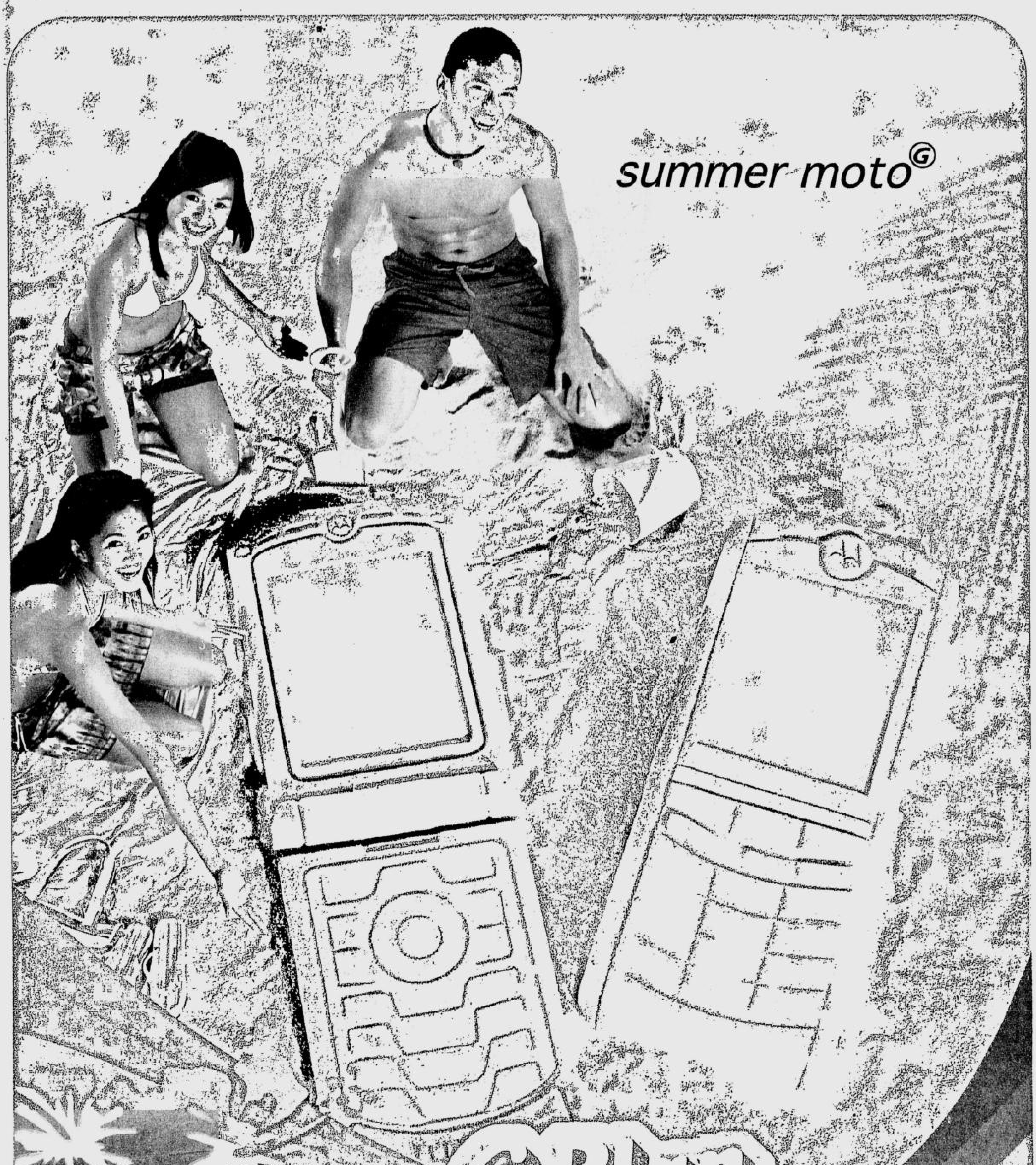
By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

PHILIPPINE International Trading Corp. Chair Roberto Pagdanganan yesterday reiterated his appeal to doctors to prescribe drug brands sold at the government's Botika ng Bayan.

Medicines sold at the 200 Botika ng Bayan accredited drugstores are up to 50 percent cheaper than brands usually prescribed by doctors, he said.

"We are in the process of working with them (doctors). So far, the response has been generally positive," Pagdanganan told reporters in San Juan yesterday.

But he admitted that with limited funds, his agency could not match the way multinational medicine manufacturers appeal or promote their products to doctors.



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Southwoods takes lead by 2; Del Monte second

By Musong R. Castillo

MURCIA, Negros Occidental—Southwoods played according to hype, Canlubang sputtered in the opener for the second straight year and Del Monte wedged itself between the two powerhouses yesterday at the start of the PAL Interclub championship here.

Hanson So Jr. and 14-year-old Miko Yee led the Southwoods charge, carding a level-par 70 worth 36 points and a 73 for 33, respectively, at the Binitin course as the Carmona-based team posted a 130 total and a two-point lead over Del Monte.

Michael Bibat, the reigning Singapore Amateur champion, turned in a 31 and Gene Bondoc completed Southwoods' output with 30 points. Bong Brobio's 25 did not count.

The defending champion from Bukidnon clung at the

SOUTHWOODS/ A22

HANSON So misses his birdie putt on No. 8
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

COACH Chot Reyes eyes three Filipino collegiate players in the US. PDI PHOTO

Chot looking far and wide for prospects

By June Navarro

THE SEARCH for players willing to play for the national basketball team has gone beyond the country's borders.

Philippine team head coach Chot Reyes is leaving for the United States early next month to track down three foreign-born players whom he plans to invite to the national team tryouts.

US-based dribblers Alex Cabagnot, Joe Devance and Ryan Reyes, all college ball mainstays in the US, will be asked to come over should Reyes find them fit for the PBA-backed RP squad.

"We are still looking for players who can fit the system," said Reyes a day after choosing 21 players to the training pool from where the core of the national team will come.

"We scout for players outside of the country because we want to form the best team possible," he added.

A 6-foot-1 point guard, Cabagnot played for University of Hawaii at Hilo Vulcans where he normed 9.6 points per game in the 2003-2004 US NCAA season.

Born in Quezon City but raised in Hawaii, the 22-year-old Cabagnot started in 23 out of 25 games for the Vulcans and compiled 116 assists and 48 steals.

Cabagnot, who briefly saw action for Los Angeles Valley College, was a two-time Most Valuable Player at Eagle Rock High School.

Devance is a 6-foot-7 forward out of University of Texas El Paso. He played in the 2002-2003 US NCAA season and averaged three points in 28 games.

The 6-1 Reyes took care of the playmaking chores for Cerritos College and averaged 8.5 points, 4.2 assists and 3.3 rebounds for the Vikings.

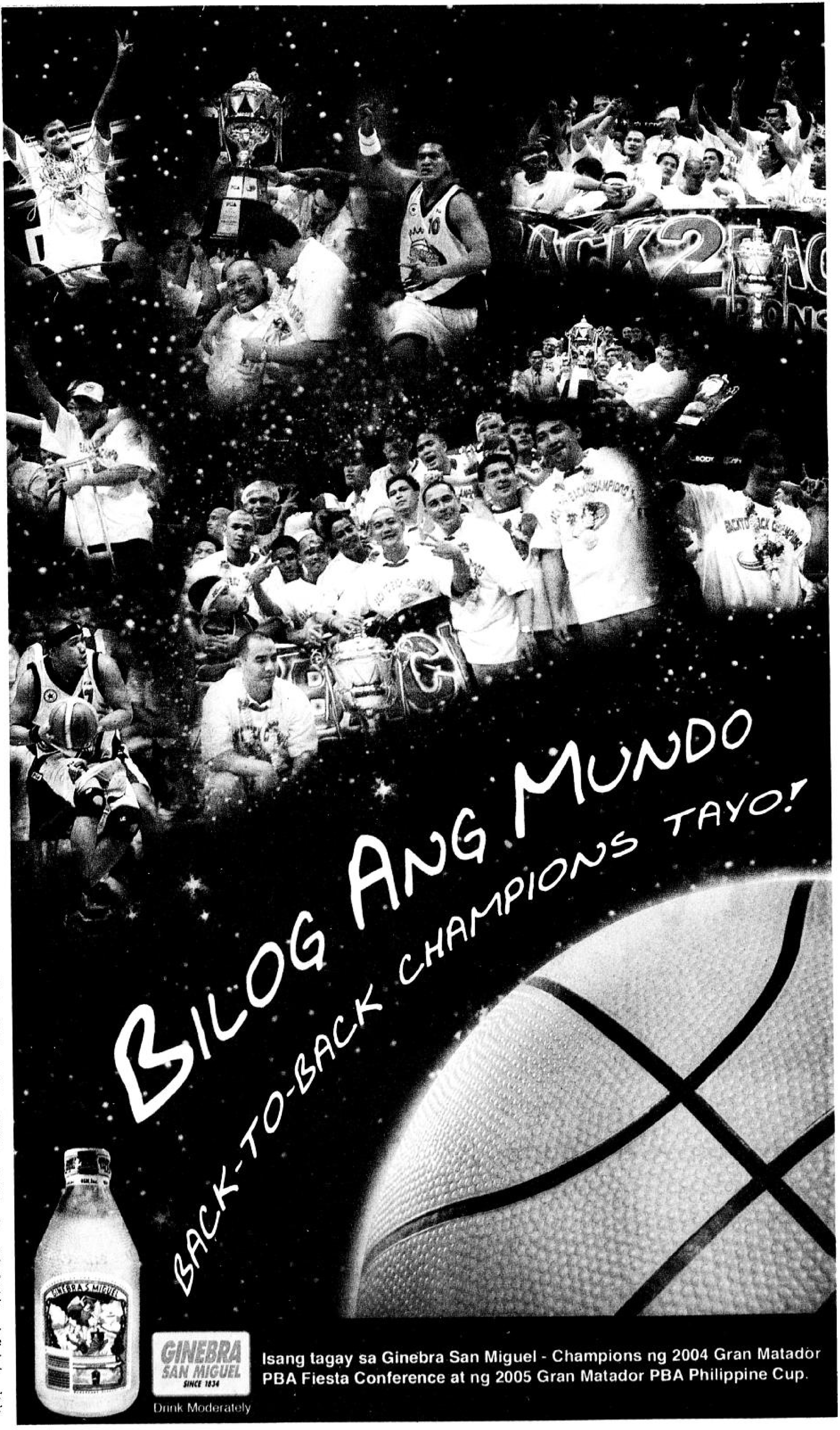
A proud owner of 100 pairs of Nike shoes, the 21-year-old Reyes was born in Los Angeles, California, from Filipino parents Lito and Evelyn Reyes.

Should these players impress Reyes, they will join the 21 players in the national pool.

Although Reyes admitted that some of the players already have the inside track on RP team slots, he said the coaching staff—also composed of Norman Black, Tim Cone and Jong Uichico—will never stop searching for the right players for the team.

Meanwhile, Sta. Lucia Realty has sent import Nate Williams packing after failing the drug test, Games and Amusements Board official Jess Villanueva told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The Realtors have earlier acquired Oliver Agapito and signed up free agent Chester Tolomia to beef up their roster.



Isang tagay sa Ginebra San Miguel - Champions ng 2004 Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at ng 2005 Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup.

Drink Moderately

Southwoods takes lead

From page A21

DEL MONTE top man Romeo Jaraula blasts out on No. 8 ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

coattails of Southwoods as Boboy Jaraula, Lino Retuerto and Joel Opaco matched the top three scores of Southwoods.

Del Monte lost ground only when Ondoy Mondilla and Jett Plete came up with no better than 28 points each.

"It's a good sign to be leading even if our top man for the day (Bibat) struggled," said Southwoods' Jeric Hechanova. "We're very confident, because we play our big guns (today) and we're up (in the standings)."

Del Monte, which surprised the field last year by opening up with 156 points built around Jaraula's seven-under 65 at their home course, again made heads turn this year, its 128 total a virtual statement for the non-believers.

"I've been telling the players that we can win this thing outside Del Monte," captain Yoyong Velez said. "We proved that it's not a two-team fight as reported in the papers."

Juvic Pagunsan played an up-and-down round in the venue where he used to caddy, scoring only 32 points as Canlubang, paced by Boyet Saragoza's 34, trailed Southwoods by six going into the second round today at the Marapara course in Bacolod.

The Sugar Barons, who also started in third place last year in Cagayan de Oro, tallied 124 points after Abe Rosal contributed 30 and Jose Mari Hechanova a 28. Former World Amateur team member Dave Hernandez's 27 did not count.

"We're not down and out yet," said Canlubang non-playing captain Luigi Yulo. "Three rounds is still a long way to go."

Wack Wack was fourth in Championship Division play with a 115 total with Sunny Sun Jr. scoring 32 and John Gobing backing him up with 31. Vince Sy and Oliver Gan scored 26s to count.

Villamor was fifth at 114.

Velez sees action today for Del Monte together with Ben and Paul Miñoza, Tristan Tabanas and Louie Dacudao, while Southwoods fields the flamboyant Artemio Murakami, Jun Jun Plana, Laurence Negrido, Miko Alejandro and Tonton Asistio.

Reigning RP Amateur champ Jun Bernis, Jay Bayron, Ronnie Torrecampo, JR Tanpinco and Matthew Manotoc debut for Canlubang.

Meanwhile, veteran Montito Garcia sizzled with the low round of the day—a one-under 69—at the Marapara to boost Cebu Country Club to the Founders Division lead.

Kevin Go-Choi scored a 30 and two 29s from among Gene Aznar, Jovi Neri and Andre Borromeo counted in Cebu's 125, good for a four-point lead over third-placed Riviera, which got a 35 from Marvin Dumandan.

Pagcor, ABS-CBN International, Airbus, GE Aircraft Engines, Boeing, Mastercard International, Globe Platinum, Joey 92.3, Royal Caribbean International, Golden Nuggets Hotel and People Asia are the major sponsors of the annual tournament.

Fortune Tobacco, Radio Mindanao Network, Premier Wine and Spirits, Star Cruises and 96.3 WRock are corporate backers, with RJ Broadcasting Network, Century Park Hotel, Asia Brewery Inc., INQ7.net, Tanduay Rhum and Air Philippines the minor sponsors.

Top 10 first round scores:

CHAMPIONSHIP DIVISION—Southwoods 130, Del Monte 128, Canlubang 124, Wack Wack 115, Villamor 114, Brookside 90, Leyte 88, Cotabato 65, Mabuhay 49, JFGA Tokyo 39.

FOUNDERS DIVISION—Cebu 125, Riviera 121, Valley 119, Negros 118, Pueblo de Oro 114, Forest Hills 108, Manila 107, Sherwood Hills 105, Team LA 103, Orchard 100.

SPORTSWRITERS DIVISION—Pamplona 105, Iligan 104, Palos Verdes 98,Iloilo, Sta. Elena 98,Paoay 85,Mactan 84,Pittsburg 83,San Juanico 82,Lumbia 80, Alta Vista 78.

FRIENDSHIP DIVISION—Bacolod 88, Bay Area 86, Victorias 77, Stanford 76, SFO Crystal 75, Skywest 73, UP Tee Jots 72, Fil-Am Fairfield 69, Maharlika 68, Seattle 66.

Hilarious Henry

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

BACOLOD CITY—Some play golf for the money. This cuts both ways to professionals and businessmen alike.

The pros are in the game because it's their livelihood. And to some, especially the gifted and skilled and hardworking, what a lucrative job golf is to them.

The best thing about it is, the pros have the built-in luxury of playing and then ending their day with prospects of fat checks coming their way.

Play and earn, that's what. Nothing beats the game's potentials that I wish one of Dayong and Magirl's kids would soon pick up the game.

Just last Sunday, Jennifer Rosales took home $150,000 in winning the Hawaiian Open. That's roughly P7 million. Many journalists can't earn that much in their lifetime no matter how beautiful the prose they produce day in and day out.

Businessmen, if they know their business, consider golf the language of business as megabuck deals are sometimes sealed either on the fairway or putting green. Sometimes, it instantly happens with the first handshake done at the first tee box, signaling what could be the start of a beautiful, profitable, day in the sun.

But not every golfer plays the game for the money. Many still play it simply because they love the game. To this breed of golfers, golf is a release, a tool to ease the burden, the stress, of the week.

Some do play for the money, but they usually wager friendly bets.

The other, more adventurous people in this group, well, they play to gamble. They use golf to try to earn a living—from their own friends.

Still to others belonging to this breed, golf is for enjoyment middle of the week, during weekends.

Take the case of Henry So Uy, the powerful executive vice president of Philippine Airlines.

"As much as I can, I play golf on weekends," Henry said. "I am very relaxed playing the game on Saturdays and Sundays."

I had the rare chance to play golf with Henry last weekend at the NOGCC. I found him to be a jolly fellow, oozing with wit and jokes that can make you double in laughter.

Also in our flight were PAL president Jimmy Bautista, Rep. Nyoks Puentevella and PAL Interclub chair Domeng Duerme.

Although the round had been set days before, I almost did not join the group as a fivesome, said rules man Boy Blue Ocampo, might get in the way of the PAL Seniors Interclub final round during the crossover. I was willing to forego my slot.

When Henry learned about it, he came to me and said, "No, Al, come on let's play. Let's have lunch first."

It's a crime to resist Henry's invitation?

And so we played, all five of us. And luckily, we finished the round hitch-free. No slow play. Always, ready golf.

Still, our day was not without fun despite the tight atmosphere.

When Domeng Duerme sank a long putt for par, he got a ribbing from Henry.

"It seems like you are staying more on the golf course these days than in the office," Henry said.

Domeng Duerme could only laugh. He knew, we knew, Henry was just joking.

But then, the mild-mannered Jimmy Bautista reinforced Henry's jesting: "Now I know why our sales in Mindanao is going down."

Domeng Duerme is PAL vice president for the Visayas and Mindanao.

Nyoks, who heads the transportation committee in Congress, and I could only let out our own share of guffaws.

Henry cracked more jokes aimed at Domeng during the round, but through it all, Domeng came out unscathed. A real sportsman of the first degree, he took the occasional roasting in stride.

It was a round minus the usual friendly bets between Domeng and me, but it was still an occasion worth remembering, given Henry's hilarious witticisms that more than amply decorated our 18-hole showdown.

Needless to say, my round with Henry, Jimmy, Domeng and Nyoks was special in that new frontiers had been established and relations cemented, searing heat and all. New flightmates, new horizons.

Always, life is not supposed to be monotonous or we could even die of boredom.

***

FASTBREAK. Pareng Nimrod Quinones missed the PAL Media tournament here on Tuesday, but he said his sadness was more than replaced with gladness when he saw my 30-yard pitch on NOGCC's No. 18 stop 10 feet from the cup. When I made the putt for par, he cheered lustily. Thanks, *Pare.*

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RP spikers trounce Macau, meet Chinese-Taipei today

GAMES TODAY (San Carlos Gym)
5 p.m.—Macau vs Tonga
7 p.m.—Chinese Taipei vs RP

By Roy Luarca

CEBU CITY—A good warm-up for a tough grind ahead.

That's what the Philippines got yesterday as it blasted Macau, 25-13, 25-17, 25-19, in the opener of the FIVB World Men's Volleyball Championship qualifier at the packed University of San Carlos Gym here.

The Filipinos, powered by enlisted men Dante Alinsunurin and Herminio Gallo Jr., needed only 70 minutes to down their rivals to the delight of the more than 4,000 fans who watched the inaugural of the five-nation tournament being held to select Asia-Pacific's Group C representatives to the second round of the worldwide eliminations.

"The boys' morale is high, this is a good start," said Philippine team coach Vip Isada. "But there's still much room for improvement. We need to jell a little more."

Formed only last January, more than half of the local players here will form the core of the RP team for the Southeast Asian Games this November.

Based on their performance against the Chinese, the 6-foot-2 Alinsunurin of the Philippine Air Force and the 5-foot-10 Gallo of the Army should make the grade.

Alinsunurin accounted for 16 hits while Gallo added 13 as the Filipinos routed their less-skilled opponents both in offense and in defense.

With Gino Macailan joining Alinsunurin up front, the Filipinos pulled off 15 blocks. In contrast, Macau, despite the presence of 6-foot-3 Too Chuen ki could only reject two.

The Filipinos will next face the powerhouse Taiwanese at 7 p.m. today.

St. Clare, PCU junior cagers gain q'finals

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DUMAGUETE CITY—St. Clare College bucked the absence of four key players to outclass Salazar Institute of Technology-Cebu, 85-68, yesterday and join Philippine Christian University in the junior division quarterfinals of the National Students basketball championship here.

The Saints, runners-up in the National Capital Region eliminations, still showed enough sock in demolishing their Cebu-based squad at the Foundation University Gym and marched into the next round with a 3-1 win-loss record.

The PCU Baby Dolphins, the NCR titlists, swept to their fourth straight victory with a 123-72 rout of Western Mindanao State University-Zamboanga also at the FU Gym.

"I told my players not to get intimidated even if they are only 10 in the lineup here," said St. Clare manager Joel Dualan. "The important thing for us is to play and give it our best every time."

The Saints, who took an 81-40 advantage over the Salazar cagers with only 3:20 to play, are making do minus Dominic Siruma, Aldren Gueriba, Mark Austria and Jeffrey Bello, who are all being dogged by A-list collegiate teams.

"They just didn't show up anymore," said Dualan.

Siruma and Gueriba are reportedly being eyed by La Salle and University of the East, respectively.

St. Clare next plays Iloilo Central Commercial High School in Tanjay town, some 30 km from this city, tomorrow, while PCU takes on University of Perpetual Help-Laguna at the Lamberto Macias Gym here.

In senior play, Bohol Institute of Technology came from behind to down regional champion Asian College of Science and Technology-Cagayan de Oro, 88-80, at Macias gym to set up a quarterfinal duel against Southern City College-Zamboanga.

Guest team National University will face University of Santo Tomas in another quarterfinal clash regardless of the Tigers' game late yesterday against University of Luzon.

Meanwhile, Philippine Maritime Institute and University of Perpetual Help-Daltas System, which swept their respective brackets, seek semifinal berths today.

The Altas will take on West Negros College while the Admirals go up against the winner of the Holy Cross College Davao-University of Baguio match still being played at presstime.

In women's action, last year's runner-up Ateneo de Manila and PMI barged into the semifinals after winning their respective matches at the Silliman University Gym. The Lady Eagles mangled the host SU Women, 91-15, while the Lady Admirals drubbed UE, 58-43.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Thursday March 3, 2005

TUESDAY
7:30 PM and 10:00 PM
WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY
7:00 PM and 10:00 PM
American Idol
ABC
Iba tayo
SPECIAL SCHEDULE THIS WEEK!

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romance	Masked Rider Ryuki		Gatekeepers	TV Patrol		Spirits	Krystala	'Til Death Do Us Part	Hiram	Save The Last Dance	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
NBN		Taiwan/ Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival					
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA			PBA		Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joyride	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knock Out	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin		Starstruck	Stairway To Heaven	Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Wrestling		NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Chowtime Na!		V League				Retro TV	IBC News Tonite	OPTV	EZ Shop
Solar		WWE Smackdown				Mutant League	Heavy Gear	Maxsteel	Dungeons And Dragons	Stargate SG1		Thunder Box		JAG					
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Good Morning Miami	What I Like About You	The Today Show		Starting Over		NBC Nightly News		Will & Grace	JKX	Ed		Girls Behaving Badly	Simple Life 2	Tonight Show With Jay Leno			
Studio 23	Bewitched	Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	UAAP				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model	Barkada Nights				News Central	The Oprah Winfrey Show		Spin City
AXN		The Amazing Race 7				Maximum Exposure		Samurai X	Samurai X	Andromeda (Season III)		Enervon AXN Xtreme	Now See This (Season II)	When Disasters Strike!		The President's Man Ground 0			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol		The Chronicle News From The Edge		Outback Jack		Friends	American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations		Mummy Road Shows	Tales Of The Living Dead	The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Built For The Kill		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations	
Solar Sports		IBF Korea Open '05 MSngls			KOTV Classics				WTA '05 Volvo Women's Open Finland				NBA TV Daily	NBA Game Lakers @ Boston					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds						
HBO	Deathlands: Homeward Bound			Soapdish (4.10 PM)				Abuse Of Power (6.50 PM)			Thr13en Ghosts			21 Grams				Trapped	
Star Movies				Slums Of Beverly Hills			The Banger Sisters			A Walk in the Clouds				Six Days Seven Nights			Preacher's Wife (10.40PM)		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Static Shock	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Codename Kids Next Door	Mr. T	Josie And The Pussycats	Boomerang: The Superfriends	Yu-Gi-Oh!
ESPN		Atlantic Coast Conf. Miami vs Duke		2005 State Farm U.S. Figure Skating				Big 10 Conf. Wildcard Game				Sportscenter Asia	Pool/Snooker Mosconi Cup '04		Atlantic Coast Conf. Georgia Tch vs. Boston Clg				Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch/Untalkative Bunny				My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video		
Cinemax			Marjorie Morningstar					Billy Madison			Hollywood Confidential			Bad To The Bone			Maverick		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Cavedweller				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Judging Amy		Strong Medicine		Killer Instinct			Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Judging Amy (11.25PM)
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Engineering		Ultimate Cars	Building The Ultimate	Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Most Wanted		TRL		Lokal AOTM	MTV Diyes		Battle of Ozzfest	One Bad Trip	Wildboyz	Cribs	MTV Fashionista	MTV Urban Beats	VH1 Video Collections	
Sports Plus	Italia Serie A				Italia Serie A Highlight		Raceworld		Porsche md 7&8	Pac 10 California @ Oregon St. Reg					You've Got to See This	Nascar Auto Club 500 Daytona Int'l Spdway			
EWTN	A Christian Pilgrimage To Jordan	Angelus (3.15PM)	Suffering Church	Angel Force	Children's Rosary	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and Nuns Of Our Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	The Spirit Of Catholic Leadership	Saints: A Closer Look	EWTN Gallery	EWTN Live With Father Mitch Pacwa		Pope John Paul's Legacy To The Family	Council Of Faith	Daily Mass		Angelus (10.15PM)	Holy Spirit In The Church	The Journey Home	

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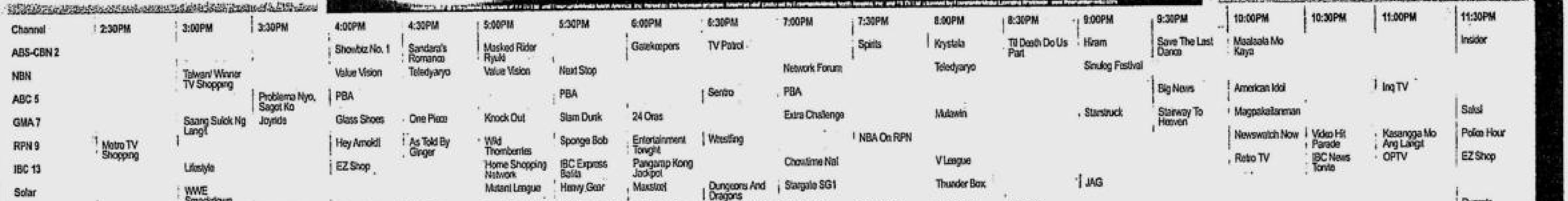
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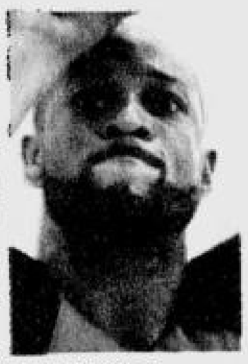
HOUSTON ROCKETS @ WASHINGTON WIZARDS
7:30 pm
NBA RADIO
NEW JERSEY @ PHILADELPHIA
8:00 am

Lewis sparks Sonics rally

Mourning seals Miami comeback

MIAMI—Former NBA All-Star Alonzo Mourning signed a contract with the Miami Heat on Tuesday and practiced with the team with which he spent eight seasons—a stint twice interrupted by kidney disease.


MOURNING AP

He's expected to make about $325,000 for the rest of the season. Mourning may be in uniform on Thursday when Miami visits the New Jersey Nets. He averaged 10.4 points and 7.1 rebounds in 18 games for the Nets earlier this season.

Mourning—who has career averages of 19.8 points and 9.6 rebounds—came to Miami in a trade with the former Charlotte Hornets before the 1995-96 season. The Heat later signed him to a $105 million, seven-year deal.

Miami (42-16) entered Tuesday five games ahead of the Detroit Pistons in the Eastern Conference, and 9 1/2 games up on the Washington Wizards in the Southeast Division. *AP*

INDIANAPOLIS—Rashard Lewis had 30 points on 14-of-19 shooting and the Seattle SuperSonics rallied in the fourth quarter for a 101-93 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Tuesday.

Trailing 89-84 with 5:17 left in the fourth quarter, Lewis started a 9-0 run with a 3-pointer, bringing Seattle within two. Vladimir Radmanovic gave the SuperSonics a lead with another 3-pointer, and Lewis hit from long range again to put them up 93-89 with 3:45 left.

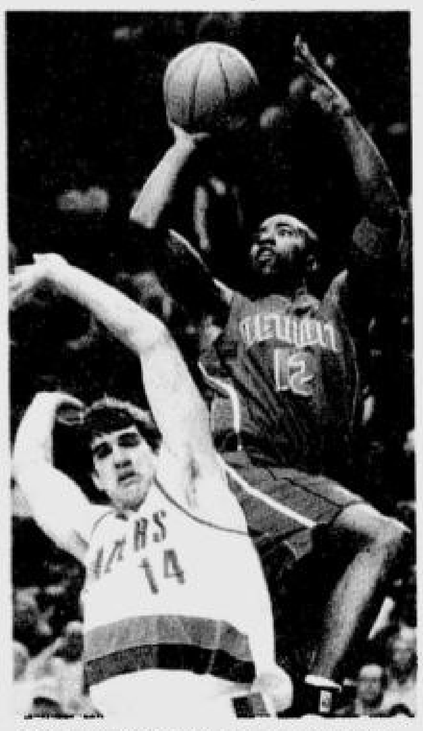
"We were more focused than we were in the Milwaukee game," Lewis said. "We just committed ourselves to getting back to playing our old way, and that's playing basketball the right way."

Stephen Jackson had 28 points and six rebounds, and Jermaine O'Neal added 18 points and eight rebounds for Indiana, which lost its second straight game after a five-game winning streak.

"We played well, and we were able to keep them away from the 3-pointers until the fourth quarter," said Jackson. "Then it was a lot of miscommunication."

In Memphis, Tennessee, Mike Miller scored 19 points and had a key steal and two clutch freethrows with 10.4 seconds to help the Grizzlies edge the Golden State Warriors, 99-97.

Shane Battier scored a season-high 25 points and Brian Cardinal added 20 as the Grizzlies won their second straight game.


DETROIT'S Ronald Dupree (right) takes an off-balanced shot against Portland's Richie Frahm, who once played for Talk 'N Text Phone Pals in the Philippine Basketball Association. REUTERS

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Gerald Wallace had 16 points, seven rebounds and five steals against his former team, leading the Bobcats to a 94-87 victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Wallace was drafted by Sacramento and spent three seasons there before the Kings left him unprotected in the expansion draft.

In Milwaukee, Allen Iverson scored 48 points, his sixth career game of 40 or more against the Bucks, and the Philadelphia 76ers won for the first time with Chris Webber, 118-111.

Iverson had 40 and 54 points in his previous two games versus the Bucks, who have been on the receiving end of more Iverson 40-plus games than any team.

Webber added 15 points before fouling out with 2:02 left in the game as the Sixers snapped a three-game losing streak.

In Chicago, Tracy McGrady scored 32 points with seven assists in three quarters and Mike James added 26 points on 11-of-15 shooting to lead the Houston Rockets to a 119-89 rout of the Bulls.

The Rockets won for the first time since the All-Star break, snapping a three-game losing streak.

The resurgent Bulls, in playoff contention for the first time since 1998, suffered their worst loss of the season.

In Denver, Carmelo Anthony scored 23 points and triggered a big third-quarter run for the Nuggets, who beat the Atlanta Hawks, 97-74, for its fourth straight win.

On the day Atlanta waived Gary Payton after he refused to report to the team following a trade with the Celtics, the NBA's worst team lost its ninth straight and 46th overall.

In Portland, Oregon, former Trail Blazer Rasheed Wallace had 12 points and 10 rebounds as the Detroit Pistons beat Portland, 103-93, to extend its season-best winning streak to eight games. *AP*

SEATTLE forward Rashard Lewis explodes for 30 big points, mocking defenses like the leech-like pressure applied by Indiana guard Stephen Jackson (left). REUTERS

Historic PBA Jakarta trip seen as a hit

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association is ready to make history in Indonesia and the first official out-of-the-country game in the league's 30-year history promises to be a box-office hit.

"Just about every basketball fan in the city is excited about the coming weekend match," said Agus Mauro, Indonesia Basketball League commissioner and organizer of the event.

Talk 'N Text and Shell, which came up with strong performances in the recent Philippine Cup, renew their rivalry at the modernized Britama Sports Mall this Sunday at 6:45 p.m. in Jakarta (7:45 p.m. in Manila).

Commissioner Noli Eala looks forward to a warm reception particularly from a huge crowd of Filipino contract workers who have already snapped up every available ticket for the match.

"This early, tickets for the games are already sold-out," said Mauro. "In fact, the fans can't wait any longer for the game to begin."

The Turbochargers and the Phone Pals will be parading two reinforcements with the most impressive credentials among the 10 imports that will see action in the Fiesta Cup.

After finishing fourth in the Philippine Cup, Shell coach Leo Austria hopes to do even better in this conference with the help of Eric Chenowith, a former member of the Los Angeles Clippers.

The tallest reinforcement in the conference at 7-foot-1, Chenowith fills Shell's vacuum in the middle—a spot that has been the Turbo Chargers' weakest point.

Chenowith is a Kansas product who was also signed by the Los Angeles Lakers.

Opposing Chenowith will be Earl Ike, a 6-9 veteran of the Korean and Cyprus leagues. Insiders said Ike is good shooter from the perimeter and a strong rebounder.

CHENOWITH

Olympic body to honor Dayrit

DAYRIT PDI PHOTO

FORMER Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit will be conferred the prestigious International Merit Award by the Association Des Comites Nationaux Olympiques (Acno) for his contributions to the Olympic Movement.

This is the highest honor to be given a Filipino sports leader by an international Olympic body.

Acno is the umbrella organization of all National Olympic Committees in the world. It is regarded as one of three strongest pillars in the Olympic movement, the two others being the IOC and the assembly of international sports federation.

The Merit Award will be presented to Dayrit in the next Acno general assembly in Seoul, Korea in 2006.

Dayrit is the most prominent Asian course director of the IOC Solidarity Itinerant Administration School for Sports Leaders which promotes Olympic education and sports management programs around the world.

He participated in the publication of the Sports Administration Manual, which is now the official reference material of all IOC courses on sports management.

Dayrit is also the author of the book "The Olympic Movement in the Philippines," the first and only comprehensive book on sports written and published in the country in 2003.

During his watch in the POC, Dayrit organized the National Olympic Academy of the Philippines and founded the Philippine Olympians Association.

He also conceptualized and launched the POC "Olympism Awards" and initiated the plan to establish the Philippine Olympic Museum and the POC Building Center in Makati City.

Twin UST kill in UAAP 67

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas will again bring home the general championship trophy after topping seven of the 26 events in Season 67 of the University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP).

The Tigers swept men's and women's taekwondo, dominated men's badminton, baseball, tennis and table tennis and women's swimming. UST booked second-place finishes in eight other events and wound up third in five others to win the overall championship with 285 points.

De La Salle, the season's host, did well in its campaign in the women's division, winning titles in badminton, football, tennis, table tennis and volleyball to go with the men's chess crown for a second-ranking 279 output.

University of the Philippines completed the top three list with 224 points anchored on championships in women's chess and fencing and men's swimming.

It is actually a double whammy for the UST during the Annual UAAP Awards set at 7 p.m. March 7 at the Yuchengco Auditorium at De La Salle University-Taft as the España-based school also ruled the general championship in the juniors division.

The Cubs won five titles, more than half of the nine high school events, in notching 115 points, beating University of the East (second, 97 points) and La Salle-Zobel (third, 66 points).

Ateneo showed marked improvement by moving from sixth to fourth place this year.

FG backs Velo Challenge

CYCLING gets to benefit from the First Gentleman's (FG) Foundation for Sports' "godfather" program through FG Jose Miguel Arroyo's support of the First Philippine Velo Challenge.

The Velo Challenge is scheduled this month until May at the country's only velodrome—and one of just four in the Southeast Asian region—at the Amoranto Sports Complex in Quezon City.

The event, a significant revival of track cycling in the country, is an integral part of PhilCycling's preparation for the 23rd SEA Games the country is hosting later this year.

Arroyo, through FG Foundation executive director Tessa Mangahas and monitoring team head and former Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) chair Carlos Tuason, agreed to back the event, which will feature the country's elite track and up-and-coming junior riders.

Air21 and Tour Pilipinas, two companies that have significantly brought cycling back on the road, both of which are headed by Lito Alvarez, are also throwing their full support on the endeavor.

Manila, through the MayniLA program of Mayor Lito Atienza, and the Tagaytay International Convention Center through Mayor Abraham "Bambol" Tolentino, are fielding teams in the Velo Challenge.

The PSC, Isuzu D-Max, Sportivo, Sharp Phils. and San Miguel Corp. are also backing the event, staged under Union Cycliste Internationale and PhilCycling regulations through its track commission headed by Fred Corda.

Aguilar leads Revtex charge

MULTI-TITLED rider Glenn Aguilar led the charge of Revtex bets, underscoring the strength of the powerhouse motocross team in round four of the NAMSSA-Philippine National Motocross Championships in Sta. Maria, Bulacan.

Aguilar, who is shooting for the lead in the coming 2nd leg of the 2005 FIM Asian Motocross Championships in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, ruled the premier Pro Open division with a flourish.

The hotshot rider topped both the morning and afternoon heats of the Pro Open category with teammate Bebet dela Cruz emerging a close runner-up.

"I call that a smooth, trouble-free ride in the Pro Open," said Aguilar, a record eight-time Rider of the Year and a recent awardee of the Golden Wheel Foundation.

The shoe was on the other foot in the Pro 125 division with Dela Cruz stealing the thunder from Aguilar. Dela Cruz won the second heat of the race after finishing second to his illustrious teammate in the first heat to pick up the overall trophy in the Pro 125.

Kenneth San Andres, another Revtex standout, emerged triumphant in the Expert Division. So brilliant was San Andres, that he left his rivals scrambling in his wake in the afternoon heat.

What made the Revtex dominance in the premier local circuit sanctioned and organized by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (NAMSSA) all the more exciting is the awesome showing of Aguilar's son McLean, who like his father, is a leader in his own division—the Peewee class.

SPORTSWATCH

Nadera virtual Palawan chess champ

INTERNATIONAL Master Barlo Nadera downed FIDE Master Jesse Noel Sales in 51 moves of the Slav Defense using the black pieces to score his eighth straight win and virtually lay claim to the Palawan Open chess championships yesterday at the Puerto Princesa Coliseum in Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. Whatever the results in the final round, Nadera is guaranteed to win the top purse P30,000. Earlier, Nadera beat National Master Rustom Tolentino and NM Rolando Nolte in the 6th and 7th round. Meanwhile, IM Richard Bitoon outplayed Rodolfo Panopio Jr. in just 28 moves of a Caro-Kann Defense to remain at second place with 6.5 points. FM Sales was stuck at 6.0 points, the same output of NM Nolte, and top seed GM candidate Ronald Dableo. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

DCP grants darters amnesty

IN A gesture of goodwill, the Darts Council of the Philippines (DCP) will give unconditional amnesty to all darters who have foregone their membership last year and allow them to play in the prestigious Philmasters 2005 set at the Cozy Nook in Baguio City starting tomorrow up to Sunday. The DCP directors agreed to accept all darters to give them the chance to gain ranking points for the national pool. The amnesty however is only good for the Philmasters. A total prize pot of P104,000 plus cups and medals are up for grabs for winners in the Novice, Women's and Men's Open Singles events which will also provide ranking points. For further details, call the DCP at 8436456, Benny David at 0917-8258101 and Norman Seo at 0915-4414306.

MCC unveils two chess tilts

THE MCC Executive and Unrated active chess tournaments kick off on Mar. 5 and 6 respectively at the club's headquarters at the 4/F of the J&F Divino Bldg., #967 Aurora Blvd. near the LRT 2 Anonas station in Quezon City. The executive event, which is divided into two categories, is open to all businessmen, professionals and executives holding supervisory positions in private and government firms and also to new graduates. The unrated tourney is for beginners and amateurs whose active ratings are not over 1850 regardless of professional status. Games for executives start at 1 p.m. on Saturday while for the unrated, the tournament starts at 10 a.m. Interested parties are advised to register at least before the competition starts. For other details, call MCC at 435-8412 and 0916-8521069.

Lhuillier defends slo-pitch crown

RP CEBUANA Lhuillier, led by its playing team owner and sportsman-businessman Jean Henri Lhuillier, defends its slo-pitch Super Division crown when the three-day PANGAEA Cup opens this Friday at the Alabang Country Club. Last year, RP Cebuana Lhuillier won for the first time the elite Super Division championship after 8 years of campaigning, beating a Chinese-Taipei team. Later in the year, it added another feather to its cap by winning the Bangkok International Slo-pitch League (BISL) championship in its very first try. The tournament has already attracted 13 foreign teams from South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Indonesia and Chinese-Taipei. It will feature three classifications: club, Group A and the Super Division, with RP-Cebuana Lhuillier having won a club championship already in 1996. The other confirmed entries are the Hong Kong Turkeys, Gas House Gang, Singapore River Rats, Taipei Citizen Cain, the Manila Gorillas, and Le Soleil de Boracay.

Adventists run targets Guinness record

THE SEVENTH-DAY Adventist (SDA) Church will mark its centennial year in the Philippines with a torch relay from Sta. Ana to the Quirino Grandstand, on March 4. The run will kick off at 6 a.m. after a worship service at the Sta. Ana Adventist Church, the SDA's first house of worship built in 1911. The torch relay will pass through Manila's major streets and culminate at the Quirino Grandstand where the centennial flame will be lighted. After the run. members of the SDA Church will also form the world's biggest human cross in a bid to secure a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records. The run will emphasize the Church's stand against drug abuse, smoking and other unhealthy practices, as well as its preference for Christian values.

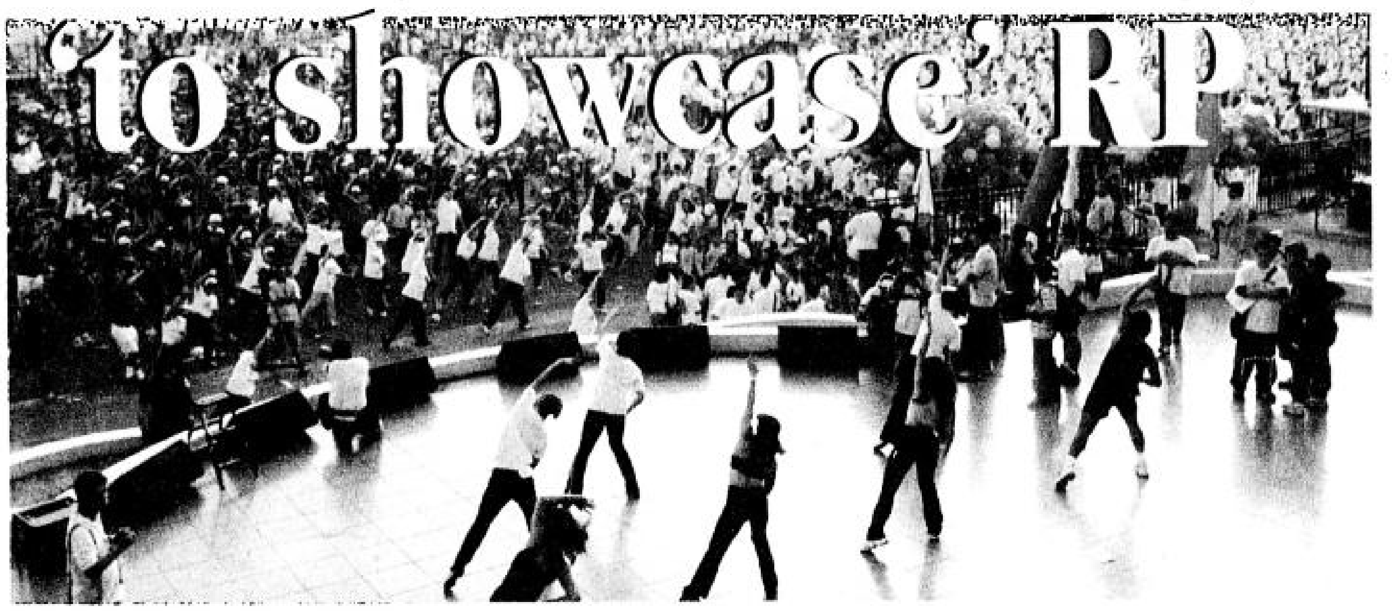
Top NCA bets eye bigger lead

THE TOP contenders are expected to parade a full show of Lemon Roundheads anew today when the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby championship round blasts off at the air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum. Three participants who are well-known for their yellow-legged Lemon Roundheads dominated the eliminations Tuesday night with three wins each: William Go/Nene Abello, Jun Kingco/Boyboy Roa and Elian Nagano of Nueva Ecija. Ruel Ricafort also posted three points using Boy Marzo's fighters. Close on the leaders' heels are Jet Fernando and Rene Medina. From a field of 40 entries, 31 qualified for the championship round today (62 fights), which will start at 4 p.m. The derby is being hosted by Bebot Uy of Davao, noted breeder Boy Jiao and the Firefly Group. Meanwhile, the next NCA derby sizzles on March 8 and 10 with Jet Fernando, MTJ Bros. Albert Dichavez and Gov. Ito Ynares as hosts. For other inquiries, please call 911-3101 and 911-2928 (look for Gloria Avena).

Annual summer derby slated

THE ANNUAL Summertime 5-Cock Derby, one of the major tilts at the Pasig Square Garden, is slated on March 9, 11 and 14, with a guaranteed prize of P500.000. Entry fee is P7,700. Hosting the event are lawyer Gildo Capuchino, Edgar Coronel and Toto Valentino. A bonus of P30,000 awaits the fastest kill champion per day, said Coronel. Meanwhile, the leading contenders in the Metro Cockers Association (MCA) Cocker of the Year race are Edgar Coronel (8.5 points), Maj. Bobby Doromal (8.5), Frankie Uy (8.5), Boy Coronado (8.0) and Ricky Valencia (8.0). The next MCA 4-Cock Derby is scheduled on March 21. For details, call 646-5858, 646-5828 and 09207199623

SEAG venues 'to showcase' RP



THE QUIRINO grandstand in Rizal Park will be the main stage for the SEA Games opening ceremonies. ERIK ARAZAS

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE LOGISTICAL work for the Manila 2005 Southeast Asian Games is now falling into place.

The Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee (Philsoc) announced yesterday that the venues for the 395 events in 41 sports "have all been roughly decided."

The opening ceremonies, scheduled on Nov. 27, will be held at the Rizal Park while venues for five other sports have been moved.

"We have no more time to build a stadium that has a seating capacity of at least 4,000 for the opening ceremonies," explained Philsoc chair Obet Pagdanganan. "But it's also a chance for the audience to enjoy the Manila sunset."

The elimination, semifinals and finals of men's basketball will now be held at the Makati Coliseum. Canoeing and kayaking have been moved to the La Mesa Dam in Quezon City.

Gymnastics will be held at the jai-alai fronton in front of the Ninoy Aquino Stadium, wushu will be played at the Emilio Aguinaldo College and the criterium event has been moved to the Luneta.

"We had two main criteria for the venues," said Pagdanganan. "These venues should meet the international-quality standard. And second, the venues won't be needing a lot of money for renovations."

Bacolod, one of two provincial hosts in the Visayas, has also finalized the venues of four sports.

Boxing will be held at the La Salle-Bacolod gymnasium, weightlifting at the Bacolod Convention Plaza, men's football at the Panaad Stadium, beach volleyball at the La Salle Community Center, and indoor volleyball at the Negros Occidental Activity Center.

Several Luzon provinces have also been tapped as host. Swimming and diving will be in Los Baños, Laguna; equestrian in Lipa City; water sports in Subic; and petanque and lawn bowling in Clark Field, Pampanga.

"It's a great opportunity to showcase our country," said Pagdanganan.

Philippine Sports Commission officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez has also been overseeing the renovations at the Rizal Memorial Complex in Manila, including the track and field oval and the baseball field.

No games will be held in Mindanao, but Pagdanganan clarified that Philsoc did not intentionally leave out the region.

The security issues in Mindanao, notwithstanding, Pagdanganan revealed that Philsoc checked out several provinces including Davao and Lanao del Norte. But none met the Philsoc's requirements.

3 gov't stations combine for wider coverage

PAGDANGANAN

THE GOVERNMENT'S three television networks—channels 4, 9 and 13—have been tapped to bring the drama, action and highlights of the Southeast Asian Games to viewers across the country from Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

"If we had the budget, of course, we'll go to the highest-rating station," said Peter Cura, marketing committee chair of the Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee (Philsoc). "But we're hoping that with the combined audience of these channels, we'll also reach a lot of viewers."

While GMA-7 and ABS-CBN will not be covering the Games as extensively as the three government stations, the two broadcast giants are expected to carry major highlights of the RP campaign in the country's third hosting of the Games.

Cura also announced that Asian corporate giants Nestle, Samsung and Yonex are being tapped in Philsoc's bid to meet the Games' budget of between P850 and P900 million.

"We're adopting a less-is-more strategy," said Cura, who's also the chief executive officer of advertising agency Corplan Inc. "We're talking to less people but asking for more money."

Several deals with private sponsors are also being worked out by Philsoc chair Obet Pagdanganan and vice chair and Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

"Don't be surprised to see erstwhile marketing competitors joining together," said Pagdanganan. "Major sponsors have been highly supportive of the appeal made by Philsoc that this should be a national undertaking."

Philsoc will formally present the event sponsors on March 15 and launch the event's logo, mascot and theme song, which is being worked on by singer Jose Mari Chan and lyricist Rene Nieva.

On Tuesday, San Miguel Corp., which already pledged P100 million, hosted a pep rally for the national athletes in 14 sports at the SMC head office complex in Mandaluyong. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Elite cast in ₱1.1-M Country Club Invt'l

THE COUNTRY Club Invitational, the biggest and richest golf tournament outside of the Philippine Open, marks its third edition with a P1.1 million pot to be disputed on March 17-20 in one of the country's most exclusive courses.

Tony Lascuña, who beat Angelo Que in a thrilling finish to capture last year's crown, heads the elite 21-player main cast in the four-day tournament sponsored for the third straight year by the Razon family in cooperation with The Country Club, a tough par-72 course in Canlubang, Laguna.

Cassius Casas, who won the inaugural tournament in 2003 but missed the cut last year with atrocious rounds of 78 and 83, is also expected to be back and use the event as part of his buildup for his campaign in the Asian Tour.

Also expected to figure in the title hunt are former Philippine Open champion Gerald Rosales, Danny Zarate, Mars Pucay, Carito Villaroman, Benjie Magada, Cesar Ababa, Rey Alit, Eddie Bagtas, Ramil Bisera, Dan Cruz, Rodrigo Cuello and Cookie La'O.

The top 21 finishers in last year's tournament have been given automatic slots with the rest of the elite 40-player pro field coming in as special invitees.

The tournament is sponsored chiefly by Enrique K. Razon Jr., who put up the tournament in 2001 to honor the memory of his father, Don Pocholo, an avid golfer like him.

The event will also feature the country's top amateurs, who get the chance to compete against the pros as part of their preparation and training for the national team seeing action in this year's Southeast Asian Games.

Meanwhile, an 18-hole pro-am event will be staged March 16 as a prelude to the keenly awaited championship. A distinguished list of invited guests from the business sector and other fields will see action.

NCR, Laguna, Quezon gain adidas finals

DEFENDING champion National Capital Region, beaten finalist Laguna and Quezon overwhelmed their respective rivals over the weekend to advance to the final stage of the 2005 PFF-adidas National Men's Championship.

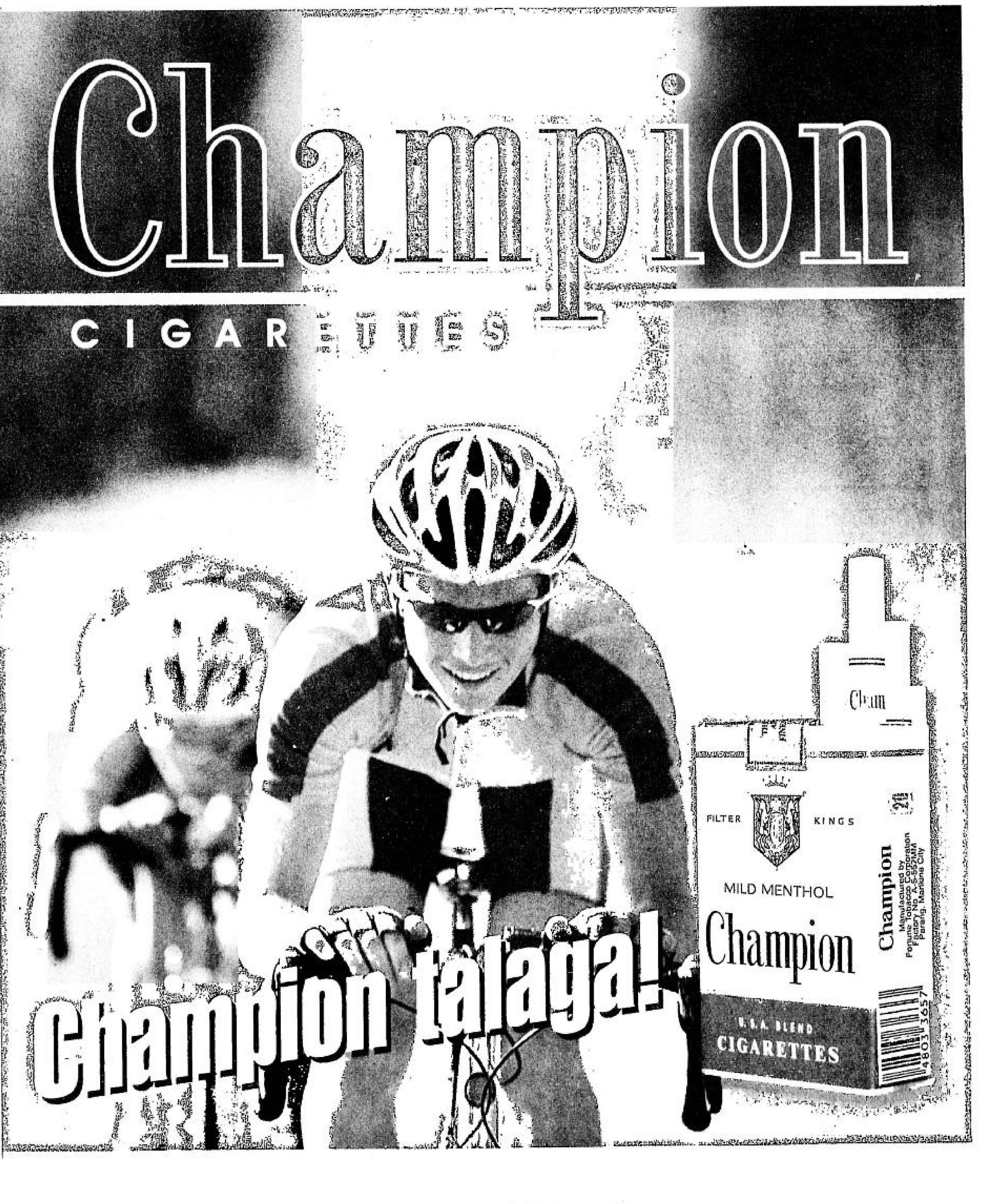
NCR smashed Tarlac, 11-1, at the PhilSports arena to sweep the North-South Luzon qualifying tournament, while the Laguna selection, backed by the provincial Sports and Games Development Office of Laguna, bagged second place and a slot in the finals with a 15-1 thrashing of Montalban.

The Quezon booters topped the Southeast Luzon qualifier with an incident-marred 5-1 victory over Masbate at the Eco Athletic Field in Daet, Camarines Norte.

Tournament commissioner Alan Payson said the Quezon-Masbate match was stopped in the 67th minute after referee Mamerto Giganto showed the red card to Masbate players Rex Abella, Anthony Elli and Angelito Bartolome for attacking the Quezon sweeper.

Masbate was left with only nine men following two earlier dismissals, prompting Payson to end the match based on a Fifa rule that does not allow a team to play on with less than seven players.

The 2005 PFF-adidas National Men's Championship is supported by PFF sponsor-partners Red Ribbon Bakeshop, Petron and SuperFerry. The finals is slated March 6-11 in Cagayan de Oro City.



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Congratulations, Tintin and Julius!

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

CONGRATULATIONS to **Julius** and **Tintin Babao** on the arrival of their firstborn, **Antonia Sophia**, on Feb. 26 at 2:45 a.m.

The baby weighed 7.8 lbs and measured 51 cm. The "morning show" couple's love story blossomed before televiewers' eyes, so for sure their loyal followers will be privy to Antonia's growing up.

The proud mother sent me this text message: "Haven't slept for more than two hours (a day) since I gave birth. My focus is all on Antonia. I breastfeed her. Motherhood is a challenge but nothing compares to the joy!"

Tintin is a self-confessed "pictorial queen" so I know she will document every stage of their precious kid's life.

Now, the cheerful Babaos can truly say "Magandang Umaga!"

Cool couple

I bumped into **Earl Ignacio** (Tintin's ex, now happily married to **Cookie Chua**).

I asked him, "Did you know that Tin gave birth already?"

He smiled and said, "Really? That's good!"

I fished for information. "Aren't you planning to have another baby? Your son **Joaquin** has turned 4."

In jest he said, "Cookie and I want another baby but she does not like being pregnant. *Nagbibiruan nga kami na mag-anak na lang ako sa iba* and when the baby comes out *kukunin na namin* (I teased her that maybe I should have a baby with someone else and we can just adopt it). Haha!"

If all couples were as cool as Earl and Cookie, marriage would be a picnic!

Ms Flawless

ANGELICA Jones is one lady who has "*no kiyeme sa katawan*" as we say in show biz parlance. She has no qualms about people making fun of the way she mangles the English language.

"Sometimes I do it on purpose just to make people laugh. They find it cute when I'm *kikay* (a flirt)," Angelica says.

"But I also know when to get serious. That's why I enrolled in a finishing school. I want to improve my vocabulary and acquire poise. I need it for my concerts abroad. I was so flattered when I had a show in the Middle East (because) people treated me like a big star. I've been tapped to endorse an appliance line, not just here but in the whole of Asia, so I should be able to express myself well in English," she says.

Angelica has such a positive attitude; that's why good things keep coming her way.

She explains, "I will forever be grateful to ABS-CBN. Because of them, *nakilala ako* (I became known) as Ms Flawless. Wherever I go, that's what I'm called."

Angelica is happy with her hosting chores on IBC 13's noontime show "Chow Time." If reports are to be believed, romance is brewing between her and co-host **Bobby Yan**.

I asked about Bobby and her eyes twinkled. "Let's just say that among all the guys I know, Bob is the one closest to me now. *Parang nakakatakot lang siya mahalin kasi habulin ng babae* (It's scary to fall in love with him because women chase after him all the time)."

I saw them arrive together at Sen. **Jinggoy Estrada**'s birthday bash. Their smiles said it all—no matter how hard you try to hide love, it will show.

Avril Lavigne in Manila

WITH all her achievements, it's hard to believe she's taking her first tentative steps into adulthood.

Canadian singer-songwriter **Avril Lavigne** took the world music scene by storm in 2002 with her hit song "Complicated." She was only 17.

"I grew up so much in the past two years," admits the Napanee, Ontario native. "I've been through a lot, I've learned a lot, and experienced a lot, good and bad."

After almost three years, 14 million albums sold and eight Grammy nominations, Avril, now 19, still stands out from among her cut-and-dried pop-star contemporaries with her edgy, guitar-driven, pop-rock melodies.

Avril has become an icon for teenagers in the Philippines, who see in her a rallying point for their youthful anguish. Even older fans are able to relate to her music.

On March 31, at 8 p.m., Avril Lavigne's "Bonez Tour" comes to Manila for a one-night concert at the Bonifacio Global City Open Field in Taguig with her guest, Simple Plan.

Also from Canada, Simple Plan is composed of high school pals **Pierre Bouvier** (vocals), **Jeff Stinco** (guitar), **David Desrosiers** (bass), **Sebastien Lefebvre** (guitar), and **Chuck Comeau** (drums).

Tickets to the concert are available at all Ticketworld outlets National Bookstore (891-999) and Viva Concerts (687-1125, 687-7794).

Avril Lavigne's "Bonez Tour" is made possible by Viva Events and Concerts.

For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaith-band.com

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3 (DOLBY) HITCH
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3 (DOLBY) SHALL WE DANCE
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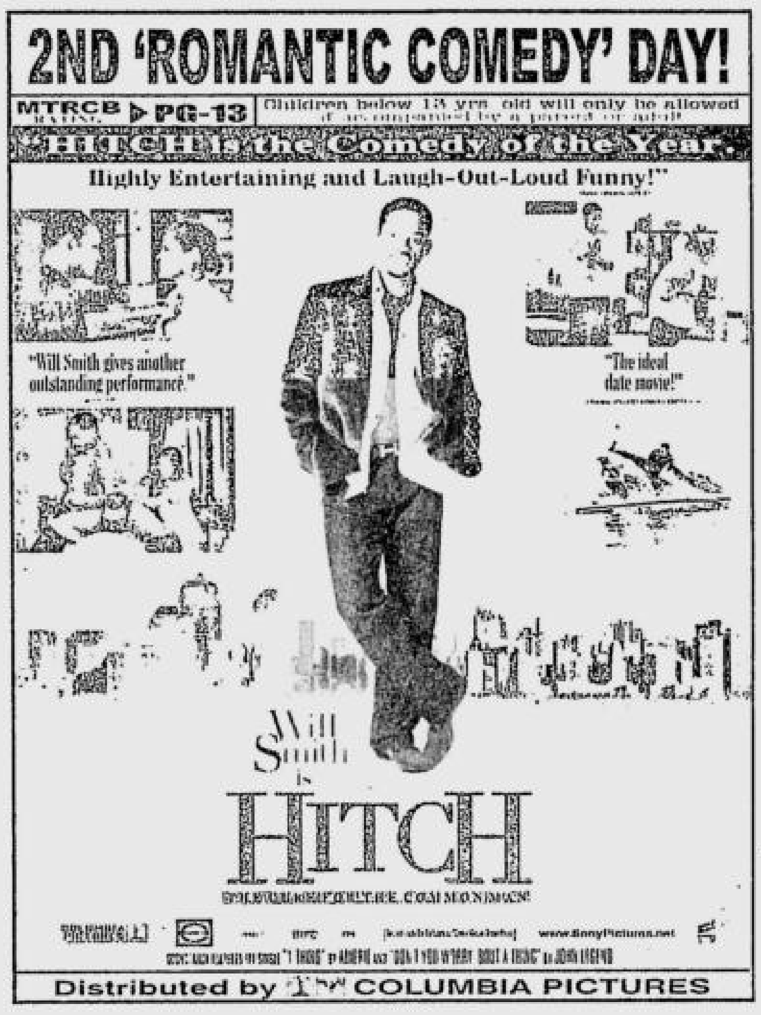

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REMEMBER JOHN McCLANE? He's back, with the same face, figure and ferocity, but with another name. Bruce Willis is Jeff Talley in Miramax's "Hostage." Director Florent Siri's description of the action drama: "It's 'Die Hard' inside a house. Bruce never gets away from a hostage situation."

BUSTED. Michael Jackson in court. He could get up to 20 years in prison. AFP

Lurid details in Jacko trial

SANTA MARIA, California—Pop icon Michael Jackson used his fantasy-themed Neverland Ranch to sexually prey on children by plying them with alcohol and pornography, prosecutors told trial jurors Monday.

District Attorney Thomas Sneddon made the claim as he publicly revealed for the first time the lurid details of the charges that could send the superstar to jail for up to 20 years.

He also outlined what he said was a plot to cover up the molestation by kidnapping his 13-year-old accuser—a cancer patient—and his family, coercing them to make a video exonerating him and plotting to force the family into exile in Brazil.

"The lives of these people will be affected forever," he told the jury in opening statements. Jackson listened quietly from the defendant's bench, his mother Catherine and brother Jermaine a few feet away.

"There is one person responsible—the defendant Michael Joe Jackson," Sneddon said, pausing dramatically for effect before pronouncing the star's name before the 12 jurors.

Sneddon zeroed in on Jackson's alleged penchant for showing pre-teen boys pornographic magazines and raunchy websites during their visits to his sprawling California estate. "Porn sites ... [and] magazines like Hustler, Playboy, Barely Legal," he said.

"The private world of Michael Jackson reveals that instead of cookies and milk you can substitute wine, bourbon and vodka," Sneddon said.

Jackson had claimed in British journalist Martin Bashir's documentary, broadcast two years ago, that Neverland was an innocent haven for children. But he admitted sleeping in the same bed as his young visitors.

The airing of "Living with Michael Jackson" led to the investigation of Jackson's relationship with the boy, who was identified for the first time in court Monday as Gavin Arviso, now 15.

Alcohol in soda

The prosecutor said the star fondled the boy on two occasions between Feb. 3 and March 3 of 2003.

He said the "King of Pop" brought Gavin, his moth er, 11-year-old brother and his older sister to Neverland after the Bashir broadcast, plotting to take them to Brazil to ensure they could not speak to media.

The prosecutor also accused Jackson of plying the boy, who had only one kidney following cancer surgery, with alcohol placed in cold drink cans during the flight on his private jet from Florida to California.

When they arrived in Neverland, Gavin's mother agreed to let the boy sleep in Jackson's bedroom. "Here is a boy with a life-threatening disease with a chance to spend the night with his idol," Sneddon noted:

One of the star's aides allegedly logged onto to a pornographic web site and showed the images to the boy and his younger brother as Jackson's own son Prince Michael, then aged four or five, slept nearby.

On one occasion, Jackson allegedly came into his bedroom, where the brothers were watching television "absolutely stark naked with an erection," Sneddon said.

When the boys reacted with disgust, Jackson allegedly told them: "It's okay, Why don't you boys do the same thing?" Sneddon said.

Jackson also allegedly simulated sex with a mannequin in front of the boys, the prosecutor said.

Jackson has denied all charges.

Gavin, his mother, and his brother are all set to testify at the trial, Sneddon promised.

AFP

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1 LEMONY SNICKETS: (SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS)
12:30, 3:10, 5:50
8:30, 11:00
GP

2 HITCH
12:10, 2:55, 5:40
8:25, 11:05
GP

3 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
11:30, 2:30, 5:30
8:25, 11:15
PG-13

4 CONSTANTINE
11:55, 2:45, 5:35
8:25, 11:10
PG-13

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CONSTANTINE PG13 1:45,4:30,7:15,10:00	MILLION DOLLAR BABY PG13 11:30,2:10,4:50,7:30,10:15	LEMONY SNICKET'S UNFORTUNATE EVENTS GP 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10
AVIATOR PG13 12:50,4:00,7:10,10:20	SON OF THE MASK GP 1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:05	HITCH PG13 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30

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4 Constantine
5 Saksi Driver

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3 Constantine
4 Son of the Mask
5 Million Dollar Baby
6 Hitch

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11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:05
PG13

CINEMA 2
MILLION DOLLAR BABY
10:50, 1:40, 4:30, 7:20, 10:10
PG13

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11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 LMF

② LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
MTRCB: GP
11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00 LMF

③ MILLION DOLLAR BABY
MTRCB: PG-13
12:20, 3:15, 6:10, 9:05 LMF

④ CONSTANTINE
MTRCB: PG-13
10:40, 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00 LMF

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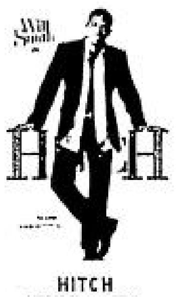

HITCH
MTRCB Rating: PG 13

LITTLE BLACK BOOK
MTRCB Rating: PG 13

LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
MTRCB Rating: R13

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1. HITCH
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8:35 / 10:35 LFS / 10:50 LMF / 12:30 END
2. MILLION DOLLAR BABY
11:30 FS / 12:00 MF / 2:45 / 5:30
10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF / 1:15 END
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sm megamall cinema 1
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
12:20 FS / 12:50 MF / 3:45 / 6:40
9:00 LFS / 9:40 LMF / 12:00 END
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sm megamall
1 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
2 CONSTANTINE
3 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
4 HITCH
5 THE AVIATOR
6 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE smcinemaexclusive
7 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
8 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
9 BUNSHINSABA
10 SON OF MASK
11 INFECTION
12 MEET THE FOCKERS

sm city fairview
1 LITTLE BLACK BOOK smcinemaexclusive
2 INFECTION
3 DREAMBOY
4 CONSTANTINE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
6 THE AVIATOR
7 HITCH
8 SON OF THE MASK
9 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
10 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
11 SAKSI DRIVER
12 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

sm city north edsa
1 THE AVIATOR
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 INFECTION
5 BUNSHINSABA
6 CONSTANTINE
7 HITCH
8 MILLION DOLLAR BABY

sm city sta. mesa
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
5 CONSTANTINE
6 BUNSHINSABA
7 HITCH
8 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
9 SON OF THE MASK
10 THE AVIATOR

sm city southmall
1 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 BUNSHINSABA
6 THE AVIATOR
7 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
8 CONSTANTINE
9 SON OF THE MASK
10 HITCH

sm city manila
1 HITCH
2 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
3 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
4 THE AVIATOR
5 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
6 CONSATNTINE
7 BUNSHINSABA
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
9 SON OF THE MASK
10 DREAMBOY
11 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
12 INFECTION

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 CONSTANTINE
2 HITCH
3 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
4 SON OF THE MASK

sm city bicutan
1 HITCH
2 SON OF THE MASK
3 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
4 CONSTANTINE

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 CONSTANTINE
2 HITCH
3 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
4 INFECTION
5 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

sm city baguio
1 RAISE YOUR VOICE
2 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
3 CONSTANTINE
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

sm city batangas
1 RACING STRIPES
2 SAKSI DRIVER
3 CONSTANTINE
4 THE AVIATOR

sm city marilao
1 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
2 INFECTION
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 CONSTANTINE

sm city bacoor
1 DREAMBOY
2 INFECTION
3 SON OF THE MASK
4 THE AVIATOR
5 CONSTANTINE
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
7 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
8 HITCH

sm city dasmariñas
1 HITCH
2 CONSTANTINE
3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
4 THE AVIATOR

sm city lucena
1 CONSTANTINE
2 BIRTH
3 SAKSI DRIVER
4 THE AVIATOR

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL
2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 DIGITAL FILM FESTIVAL
6 AIRE
7 SON OF THE MASK
8 CONSTANTINE

sm city iloilo
1 MEET THE FOCKERS
2 RESERVED
3 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
4 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
5 CONSTANTINE
6 LEMONY SNICKET'S A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
7 RESERVED
8 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

sm city davao
1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 SHALL WE DANCE
3 RACING STRIPES
4 MAD HOUSE
5 WITHOUT A PADDLE
6 CONSTANTINE

sm city cagayan de oro
1 CONSTANTINE
2 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
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'Mad Woman' US favorite this week

LOS ANGELES— No longer under lock and key, **"Diary of a Mad Black Woman"** opened in top spot at the North American box office last weekend raking in $21.9 million, figures showed Monday.

"Diary" stars the film's director, Tyler Perry, as a gun-toting and marijuana-smoking grandmother figure to Helen, a woman whose life takes a depressing turn when she is dumped by her husband.

The comedy is based on a play with the same title written by Perry.

Trailing in second place was Will Smith's comedy **"Hitch,"** which had held first place for two weeks, with an expected take of $20.4 million, according to box office trackers Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.

"Constantine" starring Keanu Reeves was in third place with $12 million, followed by the debut of Wes Craven's horror flick **"Cursed"** with $9.6 million.

In fifth spot was the comedy **"Man of the House,"** $8.9 million.

The film that knocked out the competition at Sunday's Oscars, Clint Eastwood's **"Million Dollar Baby"** was in sixth place with $7.3 million.

In seventh position was **"Because of Winn-Dixie"** with $6.8 million, followed by the road trip comedy **"Are We There Yet?"** with $4.1 million.

The comedy **"Son of the Mask"** was ninth with a total haul of $3.8 million.

Rounding off the top 10 was Martin Scorsese's **"The Aviator,"** with $3.7 million.

AFP

Salvadors post bail

By Marinel R. Cruz

BROTHERS Ramon and Phillip Salvador have appeared separately before the Las Piñas Regional Trial Court to post bail, days after they denied they were offering to settle out of court with businesswoman Cristina Castillo-Decena.

The siblings each posted a cash bond of P40,000 for two estafa cases filed against them last year by Decena, Phillip's former girlfriend.

The Las Piñas Prosecutor's Office last month recommended the filing of the charges against the Salvadors.

Ramon posted bail on Feb. 18 and 21; Phillip on Feb. 17 and 24.

The cases were in connection with 1) the amount totaling $100,000 that the brothers allegedly received from Decena for the freight and remittance business she helped put up with them in December 2001; and 2) the 10 jeepneys that Decena bought that same year, ostensibly for management by Ramon.

PHILIP Salvador has since married Emma Karen Ledesma

In an earlier interview with INQUIRER Entertainment, Decena claimed that Phillip was willing to give her the condominium unit that the actor used to share with former partner Kris Aquino—plus P5 million—if she withdrew the cases.

But Ramon said Decena was "lying and making up stories."

Prosecutor Marilyn Cynthia Fatima Madamba-Luang said in a memorandum dated Feb. 2, 2005, that the Salvadors were accused of "unlawfully and feloniously defrauding" Decena of $100,000 by convincing her to invest in the Phillip Salvador Freight and Remittance International Ltd. in Hong Kong.

The Salvadors "misappropriated, misapplied" the money for their personal benefit "to the damage and prejudice of [Decena]," Madamba-Luang added.

In the other estafa case, Decena accused the Salvadors of deceiving her into giving them P1.2 million for 10 second-hand jeepneys, which Ramon promised would generate up to P6,000 per day.

Prosecutor Teresita Cativo noted in her own memorandum, also dated Feb. 2, 2005: "Ramon said he will personally handle the jeepney operation and promised to hand over to [Decena] the expected boundary knowing very well that the said manifestations/representations were false and intended only to extract [money from Decena]."

Arraignment of the cases is set on March 11, according to an order issued by executive judge Joselito Vibandor.

CRISTINA Decena was "feloniously defrauded"

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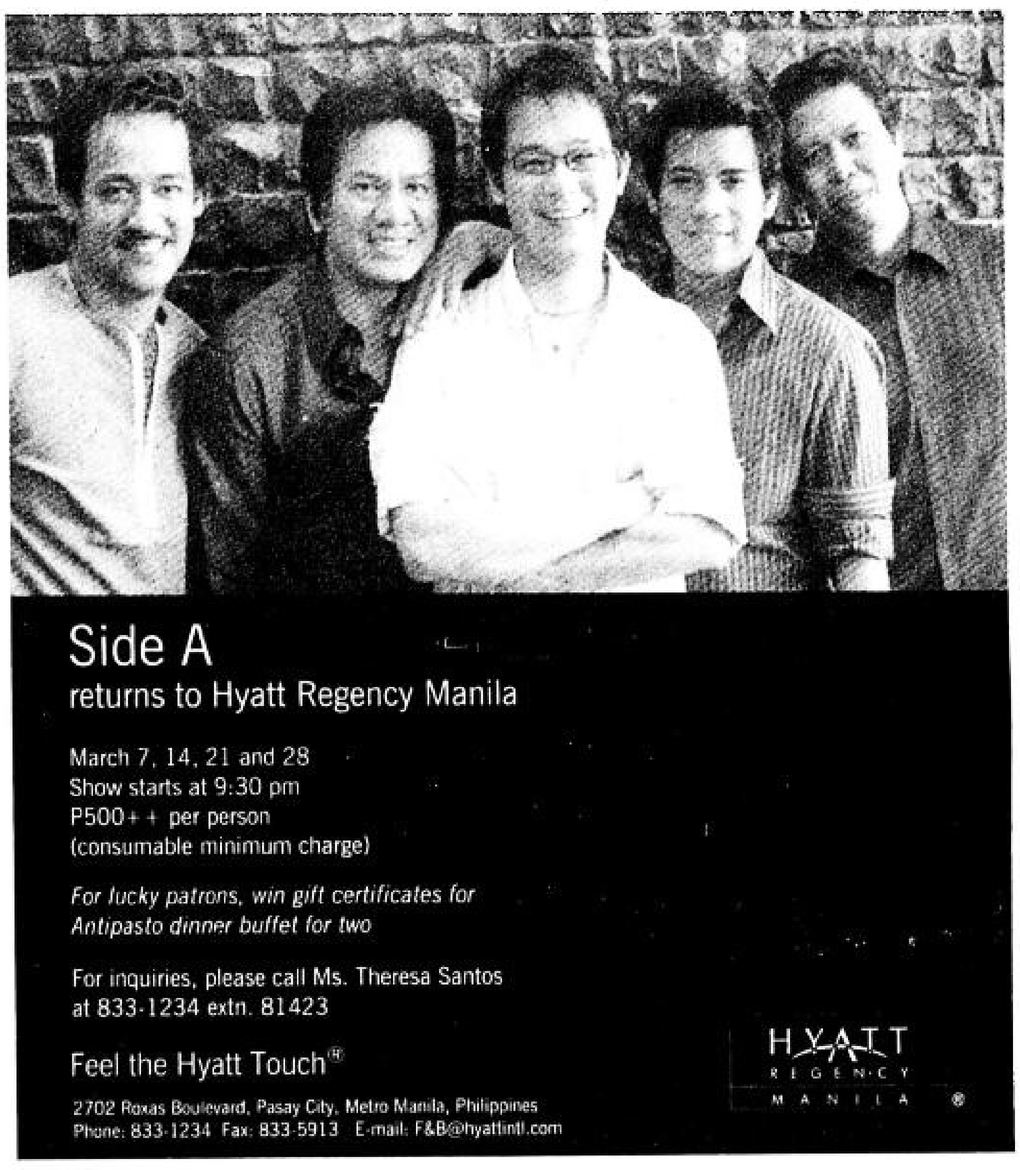

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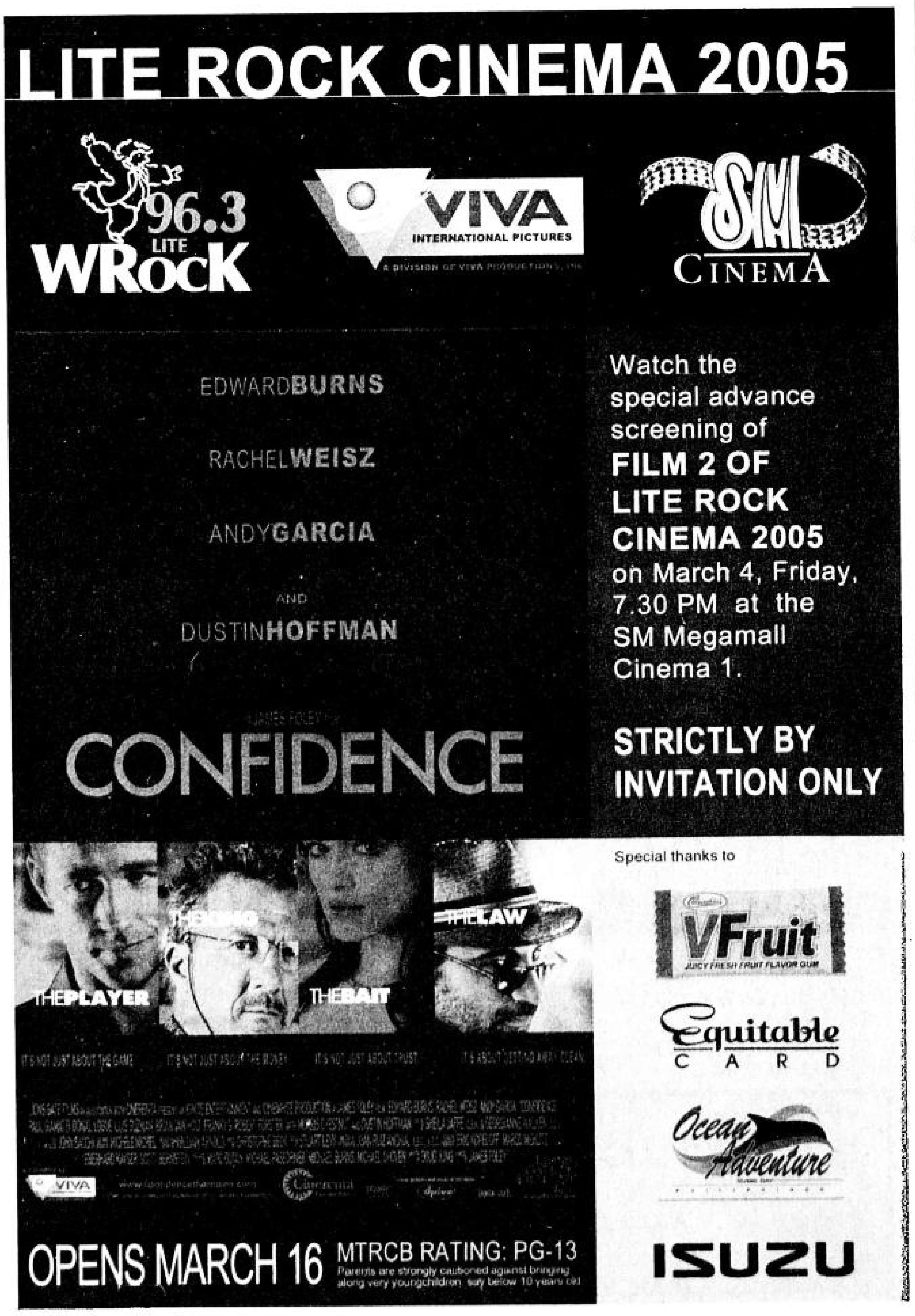

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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
- THX 1 HITCH
- 2 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 LEMONY SNICKET'S
- 5 THE AVIATOR

G1 GLORIETTA 1
- 1 SON OF THE MASK
- 2 HITCH
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 MILLION DOLLAR BABY

G4 GLORIETTA 4
- 1 CONSTANTINE
- 2 LEMONY SNICKET'S
- GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 MILLION DOLLAR BABY 2 00, 4 50, 7 40, 10 30
- 4 BUNSHINBA
- 5 SON OF THE MASK
- 6 HITCH
- 7 THE AVIATOR

GB1 GREENBELT 1
- 1 MILLION DOLLAR BABY 12 30, 3 20, 6 10, 9 00
- 2 HITCH 12 20, 2 45, 5 10, 7 35, 10 00

GB3 GREENBELT 3
- GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 MILLION DOLLAR BABY 2 45, 5 35, 8 25, 11 15
- GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 HITCH 1 20, 3 50, 6 20, 8 50, 11 20
- GUARANTEED SEATS 3 LEMONY SNICKET'S 2 10, 4 20, 6 50, 9 10, 11 30
- GUARANTEED SEATS 4 CONSTANTINE 1 50, 4 15, 6 40, 9 16, 11 30
- GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE AVIATOR 1 45, 5 00, 8 15, 11 30

ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
- 1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
- 2 ALFIE
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 SON OF THE MASK
- 5

At the Activity Center

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Glorietta Activity Center

ALABANG TOWN CENTER Feb 25 - 27, 11AM, 3PM & 6PM
Activity Center

AYALA CENTER CEBU March 4 - 5, 11AM, 4:30PM & 7PM
March 6, 11AM, 3:30PM & 6:30PM
Activity Center
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- 1 MILLION DOLLAR BABY • THX
- 2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 3 SON OF THE MASK 2
- 4 BUNSHINSABA
- 5 HITCH
- 6 CONSTANTINE
- 7 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
- 8 INFECTION
- 9 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
- 10 MEET THE FOCKERS

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
- 1 HITCH
- 2 CONSTANTINE
- 3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 4 SON OF THE MASK 2
- 5 INFECTION
- 6 BUNSHINSABA
- 7 MILLION DOLLAR BABY

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199
- 1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
- 2 INFECTION
- 3 SON OF THE MASK 2
- 4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 5 CONSTANTINE
- 6 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
- 7 BUNSHINSABA
- 8 HITCH

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31
- 1 HITCH
- 2 SON OF THE MASK 2
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 FOOTSTEPS
- 5 SIDEWAYS
- 6 RAY
- 7 RESERVE
- 8 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378
- 1 HITCH
- 2 CONSTANTINE
- 3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 4 MILLION DOLLAR BABY

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575
- 1 SHALL WE DANCE
- 2 INFECTION
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 NIGHT JOB

CAINTA 240-4661
- 1 HITCH
- 2 CONSTANTINE
- 3 SIDEWAYS
- 4 SON OF THE MASK 2

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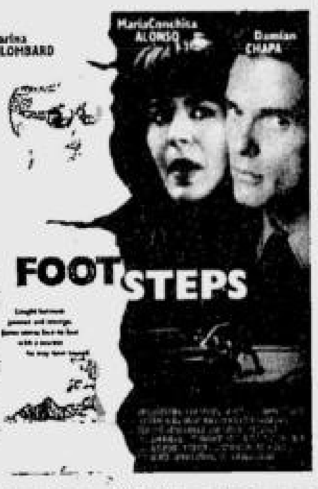

MTRCB Rating: R-13

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907
- 1 INFECTION
- 2 CONSTANTINE
- 3 SAKSI DRIVER
- 4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

LIPA (043) 757-3884 (043) 312-5870
- 1 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
- 2 CONSTANTINE
- 3 HELLWOLF
- 4 RACING STRIPES
- 5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

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- 1 RACING STRIPES
- 2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 NIGHT JOB
- 5 HITCH

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- 1 SIDEWAYS
- 2 INFECTION
- 3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 4 CONSTANTINE

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- 1 HITCH
- 2 HELLWOLF
- 3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
- 4 CONSTANTINE
- 5 SON OF THE MASK 2
- 6 SAKSI DRIVER

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- 1 SAKSI DRIVER
- 2 INFECTION
- 3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
- 4 CONSTANTINE
- 5 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 6 HITCH

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459
- 1 CONSTANTINE
- 2 MEET THE FOCKERS
- 3 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
- 4 SIDEWAYS
- 5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
- 6 SHALL WE DANCE

ILOILO (033) 336-8070
- 1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
- 2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
- 3 CONSTANTINE
- 4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
- 5 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
- 6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

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'SPANGLISH': LANGU
Goya Best Actress (Spain)
Golden Globe nominee Ad
the latest movie by Emmy a
Director James L. Brooks ('
of Endearment"). "Spangli
discusses parenting in Ame
overwhelming cultural diffe
mother tries to keep her o
swallowed up by the alien L
produced and wrote this fil
Leoni, and multi-awarded
Leachman. The movie will
Cinemas starting March 9.

CATHERINE Jackson leave
break on the opening day o
Santa Maria. Reuters

Easy on th

From page A2-4

Jazzers. Six months later.
catchier Villains. When the
became The Surfers and p
for six months.

At the peak of global
Downbeats and first tast
group to join the legenda
helped usher in the Golden
'70s. Joey wrote the famou
came a favorite Pinoy rock

That was a long time ag
"Pepe" Smith continues to

PLDT myPad

RUB DIGITAL elbows wit
month as PLDT myPad o
Chat. Log on to PLDT myP
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p.m.

Watch and chat with
darlings **Marc Abaya**
Cindy Kurleto and ne
Maike Evers, Cesca Litto
John Joe, and pick their
on different topics, from
and fashion, to career an
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FRIDAYS starting March
p.m., "Justice League Unli
All-new episodes with a
panded Justice League a
old and new villains.

Weekends starting Mar
4:30 p.m., new episodes of
Dodgers." The title charact
hapless soul frozen ins
spaceship in the 21st ce
and thawed out 351 years
By lying, Duck has convinc
Earth's Defensive Protec
that he's a hero, and has
given a spaceship to le
"galactic force" against the
et's major enemy, Mars, a
commander, X-2.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, March 3 at 4:10
"Soapdish." March 4 at 9
"LOTR: The Two Towers."

On Cinemax, March 3 a
p.m., "Marjorie Mornin
March 4 at 6:30 a.m., "E
Eden." 2:45 p.m., "True C
7:30 p.m., "Flashdance."

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JAGE OF PARENTING
'az Vega teams up with
m Sandler in "Spanglish,"
nd Academy Award-winning
"As Good As It Gets," "Terms
h" is a comedy-drama that
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A lifestyle. Brooks also
n, which likewise stars Tea
eteran actress Cloris
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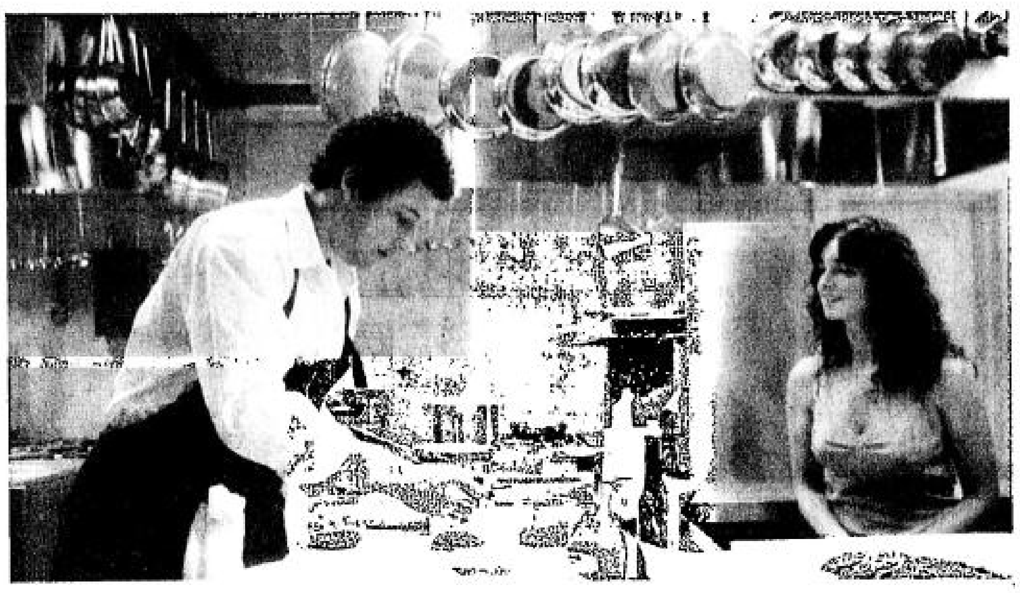

the courtroom during a
her son's trial on Monday in

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he changed its name to the
surf music craze hit town, they
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"Ang Himig Natin," which be-
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five MTV's hottest VJ's this
the Net brings you MTV VJ
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MTRCB RATING ▶ G FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE
2ND WEEK!
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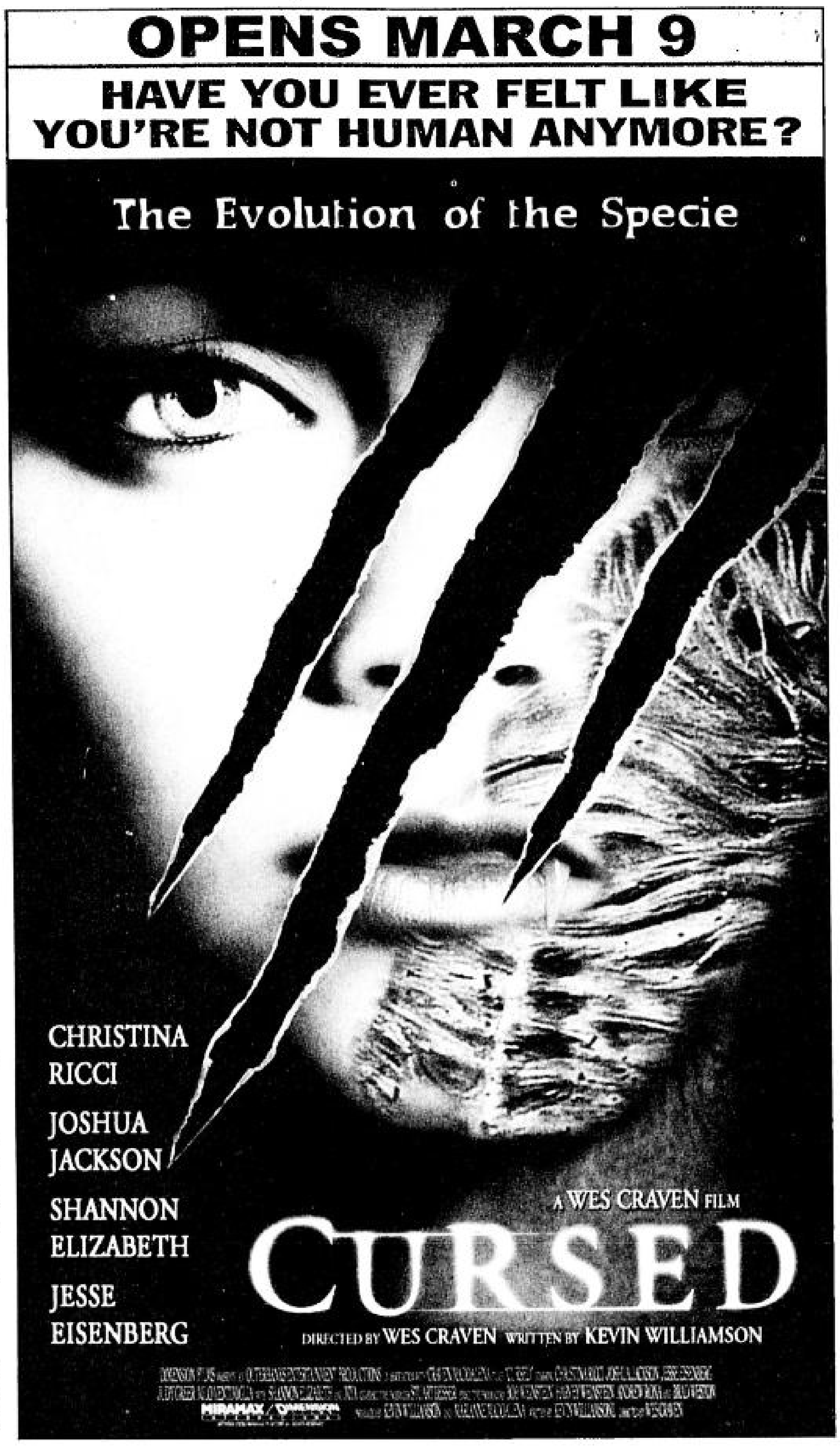
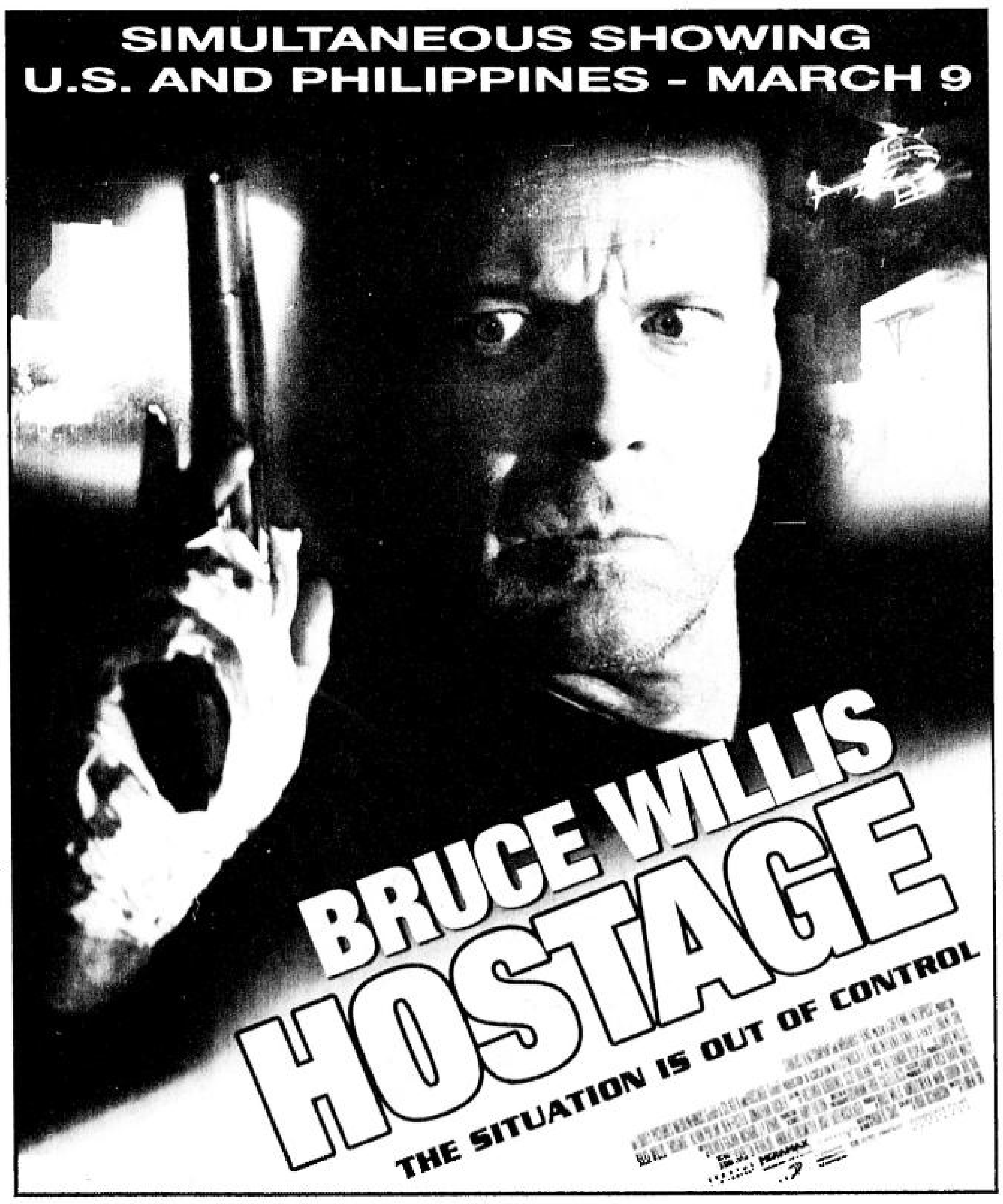

OPENS MARCH 9
HAVE YOU EVER FELT LIKE YOU'RE NOT HUMAN ANYMORE?
The Evolution of the Specie
CHRISTINA RICCI
JOSHUA JACKSON
SHANNON ELIZABETH
JESSE EISENBERG
A WES CRAVEN FILM
CURSED
DIRECTED BY WES CRAVEN WRITTEN BY KEVIN WILLIAMSON

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
What you hide, he will find.
What you do, he will know.
In the end, The Cutter will see it all.
CUTTER [kuttar]: One who specializes in editing people's recorded memories derived from brain implants.
robin williams jim caviezel
the final cut
OPENS MARCH 9


SIMULTANEOUS SHOWING
U.S. AND PHILIPPINES - MARCH 9
BRUCE WILLIS
HOSTAGE
THE SITUATION IS OUT OF CONTROL

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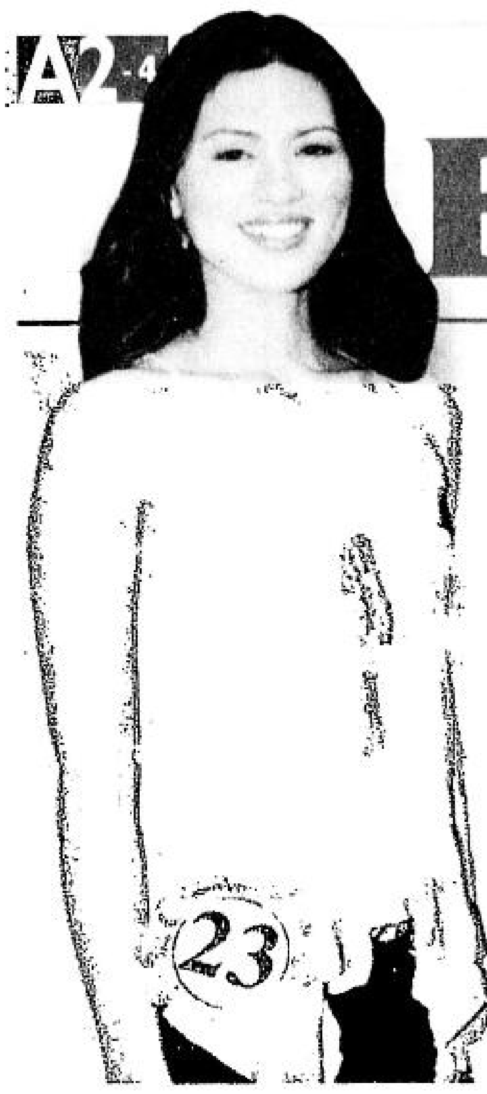


PRECIOUS Lara Quigaman

APRIL Jean Manago

STEPHANIE Florence Magali

MARICRIS Franco

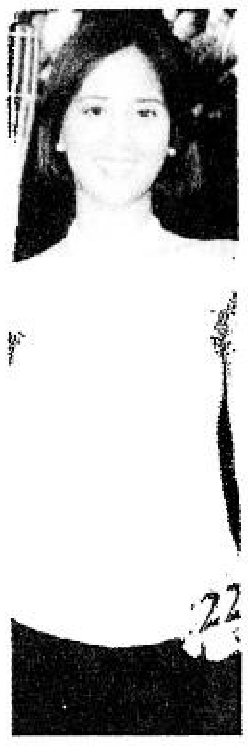
MONIFER Samonte

GIONNA Cabrera

RICAMARIE Ann Taylor

Bb. Pilipinas finalists say they're looking forward to charity work

JOANNE Padilla



MA. MICAELA Isabel Padilla

THE 25 finalists in Binibining Pilipinas 2005 all look forward to "upholding the pageant's legacy of relevance through charity work."

"I believe it's important to have not just beauty and brains but also a lot of heart to help the poor," said 22-year-old Stephanie Florence Magali, one of the finalists. She recently passed the board exams for medical technicians.

University of the Philippines graduate Lois Montes, 25, a statuesque looker from Cebu, and Allaine Christi Asuncion, 23, expressed high regard for the pageant, now in its 42nd year, because of its focus on charity work.

Monifer Samonte, 23, who's into designing books, said she joined the competition "not just to develop my personality, but to make a difference by helping others." Gionna Cabrera, 23, holds an integrated marketing communications degree from the University of Asia and the Pacific. She said joining the pageant "gives me a chance to be a goodwill ambassador. I want to show the world what a great country the Philippines is."

Not surprisingly, most of the ladies are newcomers to beauty competitions. There's Mari-Flor "Hazel" Perez, 22; Melanie Ediza, 22, a licensed nurse; Aulorence Alipoon, 23; Marie May Rosalien Paloma, 24; Wendy Valdez, 22; and Angelique Gustanski, 21.

April Jean Manago, 23, said she was grateful for the chance to take a career break. "Now I'm able to do something fun, exciting, relevant and positive."

The four youngest candidates—Joanna Rumohr, a student from the Far Eastern University, and Kristine Santiago, both 18; and Gwennaelle Ruais of De La Salle University and MarJane Dela Cruz, from Baliwag University, both 19—agree that women should, as soon as they can, use their talents to help others.

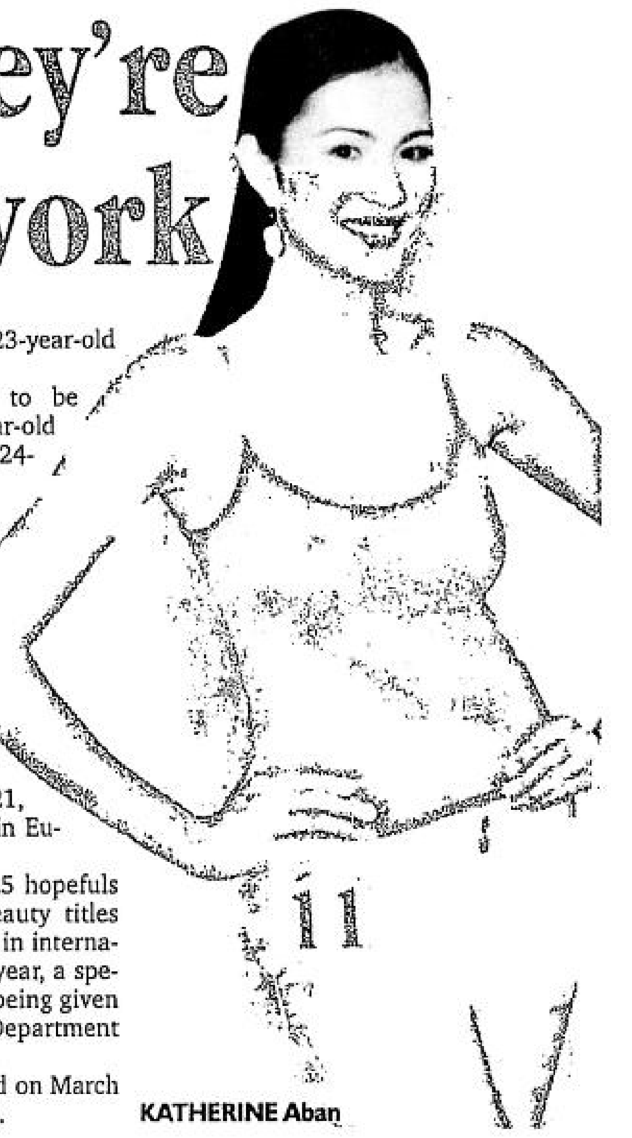
Some candidates have joined previous Bb. Pilipinas pageants. They are: Katherin Aban, 23, from La Union; Joanna Rafbel Serrano, 23; and Precious Lara Quigaman, 23-year-old freelance web writer.

Two candidates hope to be lawyers someday: 20-year-old Ricamarie Ann Taylor, and 24-year-old Ameurfina Koc.

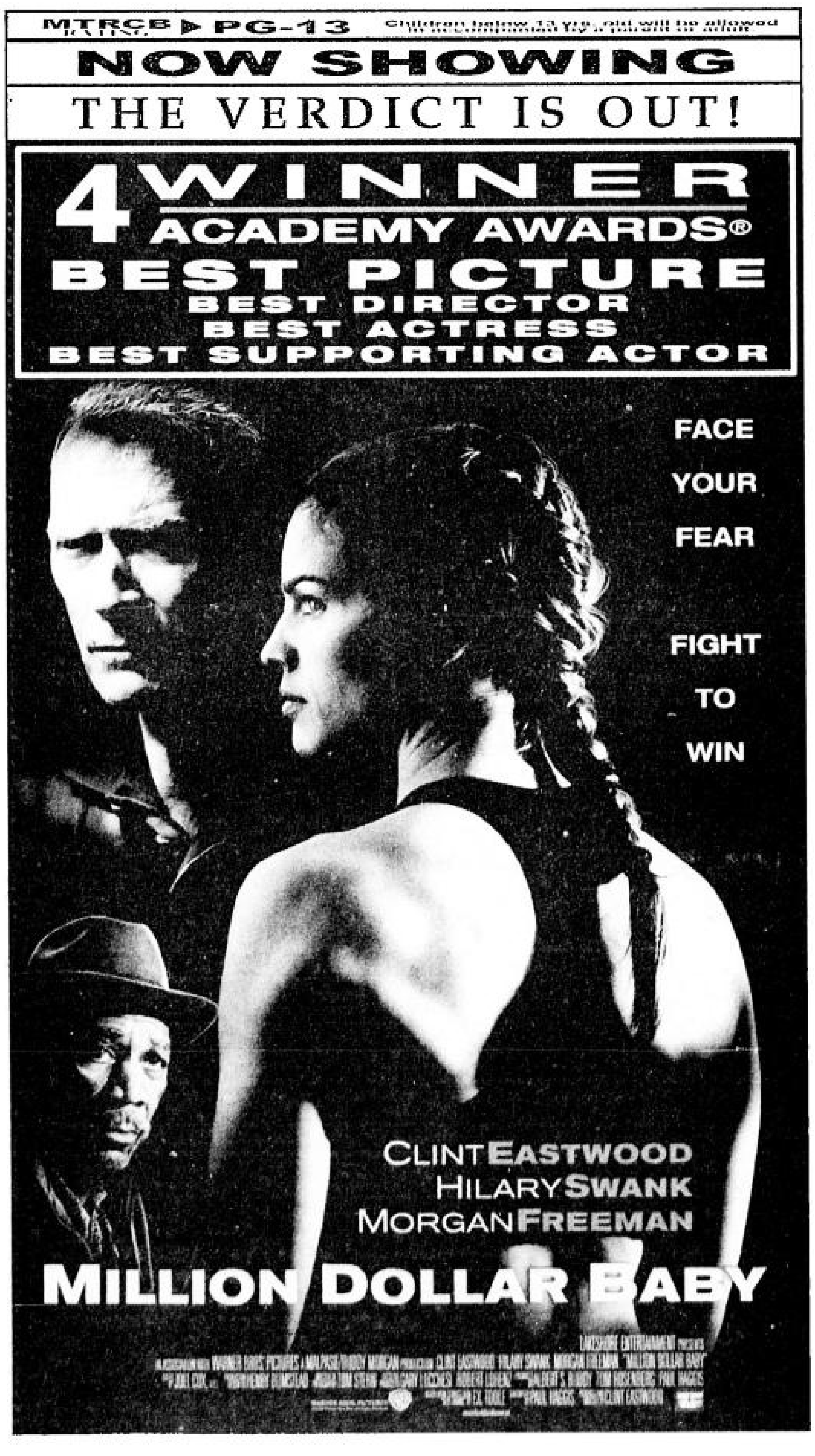
Carlene Aguilar, 23, who's half Chinese, recently won in a Hong Kong pageant. Joan Padilla, 23, was a runner-up in the 1999 Supermodel search. Maricris Franco, 24, won in a pageant in Taguig last year. Ma. Micaela Isabel Padilla, 21, has done some modeling in Europe.

Only three out of the 25 hopefuls will win Bb. Pilipinas beauty titles and represent the country in international competitions. This year, a special title, Miss Tourism, is being given in cooperation with the Department of Tourism.

The pageant will be held on March 19 at the Araneta Coliseum.



KATHERINE Aban



Easy on the 'pluperfiction,' please

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME weeks ago, we caught parts of the TV show in which **Michael Jackson**'s parents defended their currently beleaguered son. We found ourselves tuning out occasionally, because Mr. and Mrs. Jackson appeared to be painting an inordinately perfect portrait of Michael. Sure, they were his parents and were fiercely on his side, but their testimony turned out to be counterproductive because it was too, too true-blue.

Last Sunday, we viewed Michael Jackson's defense of himself in the special program pointedly titled "Innocent Until Proven Guilty," with **Geraldo Rivera** interviewing the controversial Prince of Pop.

We hoped that Michael would be more forthright than his parents, but we didn't get our wish. Just like his folks, Michael seemed to be speaking from a psychic Neverland of unrealistic "pluperfiction."

Rivera made things worse by clearly being on Michael's side and handling him with the softest of kid gloves. After 30 minutes of this sweetheart treatment, our attention wandered off to other shows more in touch with reality.

We don't begrudge Jackson and his defenders their desire to show him off at his best, but like most of us, he's no saint, so it's ultimately counterproductive to project him as one.

A more productive approach would have been to admit to some lapses on his part, but to insist on the basic goodness of his motives.

As for Rivera, he should remind himself that, as a broadcast journalist, the only entities he should be on the side of are the truth and his viewers' right to know it.

Let's hear it for Joey 'Pepe' Smith

PINOY Rock pioneer **Joey "Pepe" Smith** has finally cut his first solo album, titled "Idiosyncracies." That's an apt title, because if there's one thing the legendary rocker is, it's idiosyncratic.

The album, released by Alpha Music, has 11 songs penned by Smith himself. Recorded with ace guitarist **Jun Lopito** and bassist **Dondi Ledesma**, the album is a mix of blues, ballads and rock 'n' roll that showcases the trio's virtuosity, and Smith's charisma, as well.

Tracks include "The Blessing," "Eto Na Ako," "Midnight Shuffle," "Jueteng Shed," "Hi-Tek Babe," "Walang Kokontra," "Ihip ng Hangin" and "Spice It Up."

Backgrounder on Joey "Pepe" Smith for young rock fiends: In 1959, he formed his first group, The Blue

EASY/A2-2

MTRCB ▶ G
2ND WEEK
THIS WEEK'S BOXOFFICE CHAMPION
"BABY" FEVER HITS MANILA
Please watch my movie
SON OF THE MASK
THE POWER OF MISCHIEF

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SMC reviews bid for Aussie dairy firm

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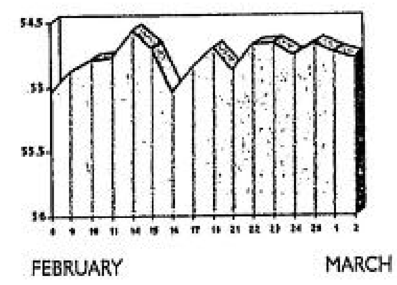


P 54.785 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 2, 2005

¥ 104.64 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 1, 2005

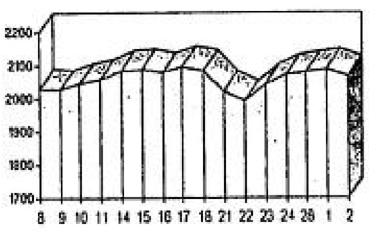
GOLD: $430.60-431.10

per ounce Hong Kong, March 2, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Shares down on profit-taking for IPOs

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



SHARE prices closed 0.98 percent lower yesterday with investors taking profits to raise cash for upcoming initial public offerings (IPO), dealers said.

The market failed to sustain early gains made following the Senate's approval late Tuesday of a P907.6-billion budget.

It was the first time in two years that Congress had passed a national budget.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index closed down 20.53 points at 2,068.42 after trading between 2,066.72 and 2,093.07.

Volume was 3.4 billion shares worth P1.55 billion after Tuesday 6.1 billion shares worth P1.4 billion.

The all-shares index fell 8.64 points to 1,191.33.

Losers beat gainers 81 to 24, with 43 stocks unchanged.

"There is a huge liquidity requirement for the IPOs so investors are cashing-in on gains," said Nestor Aguila of DA Market Securities.

The two major IPOs this month, which may raise more than P40 billion, will be followed by more offerings in the second quarter.

Manila Water Co. Inc. and SM Investments Corp. are due to list this month while San Miguel has just launched its stock rights issue to raise some P17.8 billion.

"Generally the market is consolidating after recent gains. Some investors are also preparing for the IPOs," said Gomer Tan of Regina Capital Development Corp.

AFP

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN Miguel Corp., Southeast Asia's biggest food and beverage conglomerate, yesterday said it was reviewing its bid for Australian dairy firm National Foods Ltd. after its New Zealand-based rival bidder Fonterra Cooperative submitted a higher offer.

Fonterra, the world's biggest dairy products exporter, said in a disclosure to the Australian Stock Exchange that it revised its offer to buy at least 50 percent of National Foods at A$6 a share from an earlier bid of A$5.35 a share. It also offered to raise its bid to A$6.20 a share if it acquires at least 90 percent or more of National Foods. This topped San Miguel's A$5.90 offer.

An offer of A$6.20 a share values National Foods at A$1.84 billion against San Miguel's bid estimated to be valued at A$1.78 billion.

The board of National Foods has unanimously recommended that shareholders accept the revised Fonterra offer in the absence of a superior proposal.

San Miguel said in a statement that it was "considering its position" in light of developments and that it would respond in due course.

The local conglomerate has until Mar. 18 to decide whether to increase its offer.

San Miguel and Fonterra want to acquire National Foods to increase their exposure to the Australian dairy goods market.

San Miguel already owns a number of assets in Australia, including the Berri fruit juice operations, and brewer James Boag and Son.

Analysts said losing the National Foods battle would not be a big setback for San Miguel.

"San Miguel has always been perceived to be conservative and I guess it may just walk away and forget about National Foods if it's beyond the price range it is looking at," said DA Market Securities president Nestor Aguila.

"I guess losing the bid is a nonevent for investors. There are still a lot of possible acquisitions out there for San Miguel."

San Miguel has announced a number of acquisitions in the region in the past few months but its bid for National Foods, worth A$1.78 billion, is the biggest so far. Last month it launched a US$1.8-billion syndicated loan to finance the deal.

Aguila said what might the bigger issue for San Miguel now was its 1-for-10 stock rights offering.

San Miguel announced earlier it was to offer to current investors 173.4 million "A" shares at P54.70 each and 111.2 million "B" shares at P74.74 each.

The rights issue would raise some P17.8 billion (US$325 million). Shareholders can buy one share for every 10 held between March 10 and March 31.

Proceeds would be used to fund the acquisitions and expansion projects of the US$4-billion company, one of the Philippines's largest, which is also involved in food processing and packaging.

ATR-Kim Eng Securities, in a research note, said San Miguel's shares are expensive at current prices, both relative to the market and to its peers in the region.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has ordered the government to take part in the rights issue to keep its estimated 41-percent holding intact. With the pricing announcement, the government would have to fork out P7.3 billion.

The other main shareholders are San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco, whose team manages the brewer, and Japan's Kirin

SMC/B2

Group weighs options on Coastal Road project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PROPONENTS of the $117-million rehabilitation and extension of the Coastal Road are in a quandary on how to continue the project after global lender International Finance Corp. canceled a $70-million loan, informed government sources said.

In an interview, officials of the Philippine Reclamation Authority—formerly the Public Estates Authority—said the IFC had called off the loan effective Nov. 15, 2004.

They said IFC, a unit of the World Bank, did so because the proponent Coastal Road Corp. failed to tap a strategic partner and consequently was unable to provide equity for the project.

"IFC approved the loan in principle late in 2003 but the yearlong window to make good on counterpart commitments closed," one official said.

"CRC is now looking at alternative means of raising funds to complete the project that was estimated to cost P6.6 billion in 1994 when the joint-venture agreement was finalized," he said.

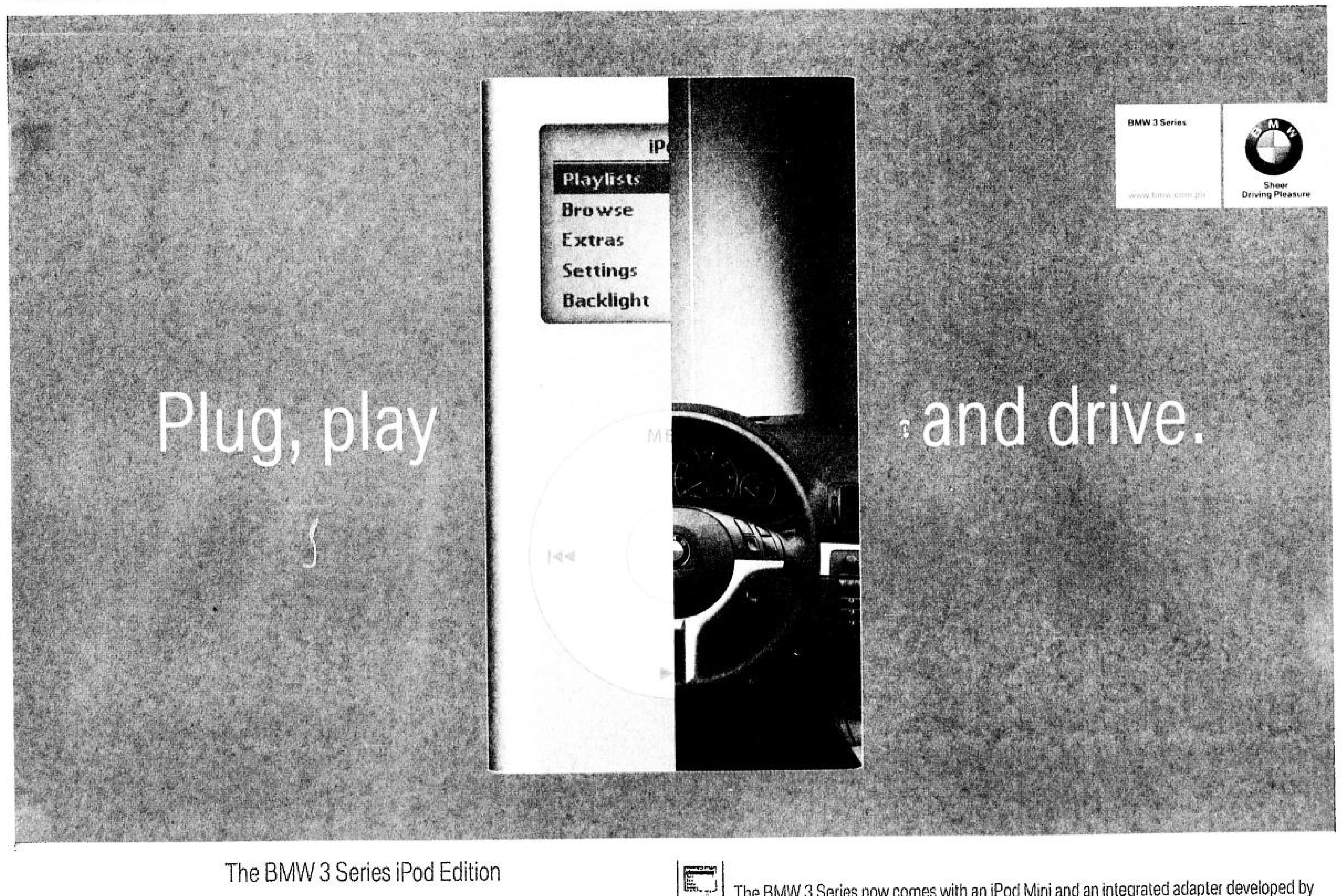
In 1994, the agreement was entered into among PEA and the Malaysian firms Renong and MARA (grouped as UEM-MARA Philippines Corp. or UMPC, which was acquired by local firm Coastal Road Corp).

Originally, the project comprised two phases with the first covering the rehabilitation of the 6.5-kilometer R1 Expressway (popularly known as the Coastal Road stretching from Baclaran to Bacoor, Cavite) and linking it with the C5 Road in Taguig via the Sucat Interchange traversing the South Luzon Expressway.

Phase 2 covers the 11.2-km extension of the Coastal Road from Bacoor to Noveleta in Cavite, which would provide direct links to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the Port of Manila—the international gateways of the country.

According to an IFC analysis, this project "would provide an efficient and safe expressway for the southern region of Manila, benefiting road users by reducing congestion and transport costs and stimulating regional eco-

GROUP/B2



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Kiss and toll

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

AT least there is very little graft and corruption in my country!

Such is the perfect comeback that I wish I could shout to foreigners, particularly when some overbearing, ill-dressed Singaporean lectures me on why my country remains backward.

But let us not be carried away. Don't worry, my friend, because there is still a lot of graft and corruption here. We are still tops in that department.

We must also congratulate all our lawmakers for setting aside their personal interests. They finally passed the long overdue budget for 2005.

Putting the interest of the country above all, they also managed to squeeze in a lot of pork into the budget.

Each of our brave 24 senators gets to choose about P120 million worth of projects.

Not to be outdone, each of our more than 200 also-brave congressmen can, er, "recommend" some P40 million worth.

It simply means that our gallant lawmakers—instead of just making laws—must make hard decisions on what particular bridge or road our taxes must be spent on.

Whether all the money goes to the projects is still the subject of an ongoing heated debate in mental hospitals.

***

LET me put it simply: They cannot just leave the roads and the bridges alone, because they know that if they don't, somebody else will make money from the projects.

It is the—what do they call it again in the construction business—well, er, SOP!

But here is one project on which I can bet my squid balls that every single peso went into it: the rehabilitation of the North Luzon Expressway, or the NLEX.

That much I cannot find the nerve to say about projects of the government, whether they were chosen by senators and congressmen or not.

Look, this cute administration of Gloriaetta just demoted the head of DPWH, because of reports of graft and corruption.

He was just demoted—mind you. Elsewhere in the world, the guy would have been jailed. I rest my case.

***

IN case you were also too busy working on some "insertion" in the 2005 budget, the rehab of the NLEX involves a private company. All together now: THAT'S WHY.

Doing the project is the Manila North Tollways Corp., a company in the Lopez group, which is also into everything.

Total cost of the project is about P18 billion. MNTC raised it through equity and a combination of commercial and official loans.

And so you can bet that no money changed hands, if you know what I mean. The project, as far as I know, went through strict audit by its financiers.

Well, when you lend that kind of money to total strangers, you better do some strict auditing to keep some senators and congressmen away from the project.

***

IN 1994, as usual, the government did not have enough money. And so the go-go-go administration of Kuya Eddie kissed and made up with private companies to make them spend for the rehabilitation of the tollways.

The MNTC got the project, and after only 10 years, we have a brand new, hi-tech, no-more-traffic NLEX.

That is a record of sorts in tollway projects. Similar projects abroad take about 15 to 20 years to complete. As usual, the government did not have the money.

And you can say that the reason behind the project's success is this man called Jose de Jesus. And you know the guy's track record in DPWH, don't you?

***

COMPARISON, of course, is the easiest way to analyze the success of anything. In the case of the NLEX, only one project is similar to it—the South Luzon Expressway, or SLEX.

In the SLEX, the private company called Citra (with Indonesian interest) charges you P4.20 a kilometer.

And that's only on the ground level—not on the elevated road called "Skyway," as if we can call it such, when we have only a couple of kilometers of elevated road that ends in a funnel, getting you to the traffic a bit faster.

Anyway, at the NLEX, the private company charges you only P2.50 a kilometer. That's almost half of the SLEX rate, mind you.

But of course, as I have always pointed out, we cannot use the SLEX as a model. If the SLEX is the standard tollway for this country, heaven save us.

They did the SLEX deal through some backroom negotiations in Indonesia, and there was talk of corruption during another one of those Senate hearings.

Come to think of it, what happened to the ... well, "investigation in aid of legislation?"

***

THE multimillion-peso-for-pork question is this: Do we get real benefits from the NLEX?

It is not just a question of how much lower the NLEX charges than SLEX. We actually get some actual savings from the rehab project, despite the increase in toll rates.

According to a UP study, the rehab and redesign of the NLEX results in lower maintenance costs for vehicles.

Under the old toll rates—which were so low—the NLEX had no money for repairs, thus, car maintenance due to bad roads was estimated at P9.50 a kilometer.

With the rehab, even considering the higher toll rates, the same cost is estimated at only P8.50 a kilometer.

Well, it's a smooth ride, and so you use less gas, your tires will last longer, and your behind does not hurt that much anymore.

***

NOW the point is, because now we have a better road, it is quite stupid to expect that the toll rates will remain the same.

But the increase was too much, you say? Well, as I said, the toll rate of the NLEX is even lower than that of the SLEX, right?

Plus, you get better service at the NLEX. It has a highway monitoring system that's the only one of its kind in the country.

Believe me, I went there to check on it. Some 15 computerized cameras are monitoring the entire stretch all day and all night long, seven days a week.

Elsewhere in this country, "road monitoring" does not involve hi-tech electronic surveillance systems. It just involves some cops. We know it simply as "tong."

***

AND at all the entry points at the NLEX, you can find electronic boards, telling you what kind of traffic to expect.

In the SLEX, once you're inside, that's it, you are trapped. You pay good money to be caught idle in heavy traffic.

There is also an emergency phone per kilometer along the busy parts of the NLEX, and every two kilometers thereafter.

Stalled vehicles get assistance from NLEX patrols in less than 10 minutes, on the average. (You'll never believe the reasons for stalled vehicles, things like running out of gas, no water in the radiator, no spare tires. I mean, where did those people come from?)

And now you get assistance, instead of the usual costly towing service. It is not a secret that people used to kill each other for the towing business in the NLEX.

From what I heard, the Automobile Association of the Philippines will get the exclusive contract for the towing service. I don't think it is going to be another one of those rackets.

Really, at the expressway, they used to charge an arm and a leg, plus a reproductive organ, for the towing service that is nothing but highway robbery.

***

NOW some groups are hitting the Toll Regulatory Board for raising the NLEX toll rates. In business, people hope that this cute administration does not, once again, just do all of that ... well, cuteness.

I mean, in this popularity rating conscious cute administration, you can never tell what it is capable of doing.

Precisely because the TRB approved the RIGHT amount of toll for the NLEX, some other groups are now also looking at going into road projects.

Roads cost a lot of money. This cute administration is bankrupt, and that's why it is trying to kill us with more taxes. So how do we build the roads?

We know that we need the roads for economic progress. Thus, the only way is for private companies to build them. Believe me, they also want to make money.

In fact, a company that already abandoned its road project is showing renewed interest in it.

And why is that? Well, it's because, through the NLEX, the government is showing that it is not averse to the RIGHT toll rates.

Meaning, you can do road projects in this country, and you can expect to get back your equity, and even earn some.

I think nothing is wrong with that.

CURRENCIES

March 2, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.758323	1.000000	54.7110
Japan	Yen	0.007263	0.009578	0.5240
United Kingdom	Pound	1.456662	1.920900	105.0944
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097228	0.128215	7.0148
Switzerland	Franc	0.650642	0.858001	46.9421
Canada	Dollar	0.611009	0.805737	44.0827
Singapore	Dollar	0.467379	0.616333	33.7202
Australia	Dollar	0.594903	0.784498	42.9207
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.011573	2.652661	145.1297
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.202220	0.266667	14.5896
Brunei	Dollar	0.465943	0.614439	33.6166
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000108	0.0059
Thailand	Baht	0.019826	0.026144	1.4304
UAE	Dirham	0.206475	0.272279	14.8967
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.318700	72.1474
Argentina	Peso	0.257714	0.339847	18.5934
Brazil	Real	0.290768	0.383436	20.9782
Denmark	Kroner	0.134409	0.177245	9.6973
India	Rupee	0.017400	0.022946	1.2554
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.199585	0.263193	14.3996
Mexico	New Peso	0.068293	0.090058	4.9272
New Zealand	Dollar	0.550306	0.725689	39.7032
Norway	Kroner	0.121944	0.160808	8.7980
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012779	0.016852	0.9220
South Africa	Rand	0.129650	0.170969	9.3539
Korea	Won	0.000755	0.000996	0.0545
Sweden	Kroner	0.110447	0.145647	7.9685
Syria	Pound	0.014608	0.019264	1.0540
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024505	0.032315	1.7680
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000396	0.000522	0.0286

Coal use up in '04

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SHARE of local coal has increased to 28.8 percent of total coal consumption last year, due to rising demand from the power and cement industries.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that local coal use has been on the uptrend, with market share increasing from 20 percent in 2002 to 23 percent in 2003.

Local coal production last year hit a record high of 2.7 million metric tons (MT) from only a little more than 2 million MT in 2003 and close to 1.7 million MT In 2002.

Based on earlier studies, the country has an estimated coal reserve of 330 million MT.

"There is such a great potential in our local coal, only awaiting exploration and development. We are hopeful that we can find further discoveries from the coal exploration contracts we recently awarded," Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said in a statement yesterday.

Just last week, the DOE awarded five coal operating contracts to three Filipino firms for the exploration and development of indigenous coal resources in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Two contracts were signed with MG Mining and Energy Corp., a subsidiary of fuel and energy trading firm Murphy Group, for the exploration and development of coal resources in South Cotabato and in the southern part of Cebu.

Another two contracts were awarded to Forum Exploration Inc., the local arm of Canadian firm Forum Energy Corp., for exploration activities at the Balamban-Naga and Dalaguete coal fields in Cebu.

Group ...

From page B1

nomic activities."

IFC was supposed to have been instrumental in transferring the operation and maintenance responsibilities from the public sector to the private sector, which is seen to improve the efficiencies of the project.

In a privilege speech delivered in a Senate session last Feb. 28, opposition Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said the contract was disadvantageous to the government and should be rescinded.

Santiago said UMPC was recovering more than it had spent in the project from toll revenues while the government was getting only a 10-percent share from such earnings.

Yesterday, PRA officials said the Commission on Audit was still looking at the projects books.

"Aside from that, the JVA provides that the government could only get a bigger share (60 percent) of toll revenues after the project has been completed and proponent has recovered its capital expenses," they said.

PRA officials are meeting with their counterparts at the CRC on possible amendments to the contract.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 2, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	29.5	29.5	28.5	29.5	212,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58.5	58.5	58	58.5	370,300
China Banking Corp.	690	690	680	680	2,260
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47.5	48	47.5	47.5	36,100
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.84	0.84	750,000
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.5	18.75	44,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	37.5	37.5	36.5	37.5	1,084,300
Philippine National Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	67,400
Phil. Savings Bank	30.5	34.5	30.5	34.5	1,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	23,000
Security Bank Corp.	30	31	30	31	23,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29.5	30	29.5	29.5	51,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2440	2440	2440	2440	80
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	31,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	135	135	135	135	1,800
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1740	1740	1730	1730	160
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18	18.25	17.5	17.5	122,600
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.5	1.5	8,150,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	950	950	930	930	23,100
Ipeople Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.9	804,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.055	0.055	6,900,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0675	0.0675	0.065	0.0675	28,200,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.38	0.4	0.38	0.4	90,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.1	34,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.75	3.75	26,893,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1390	1400	1380	1380	105,030
Ivantage Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.74	0.74	4,320,000
Philweb Corp.	0.022	0.023	0.02	0.021	370,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.75	20.5	19.5	19.5	289,100
Manila Electric Co. B	32	32	30	30.5	2,023,900
Petron Corp.	4.15	4.2	4.1	4.1	3,429,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.32	2.32	2.32	2.32	10,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.44	1.5	1.44	1.46	1,097,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.96	1.98	1.88	1.88	84,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	8.1	8.1	8	8	2,407,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.62	0.66	0.61	0.64	1,160,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1	1	1	1	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.56	0.81	0.56	0.77	41,190,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.4	4.55	4.2	4.3	17,008,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	215,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	39,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.85	3.85	15,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	37.5	37.5	37	37	40,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29.5	29.5	29	29.5	752,700
Pancake House Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.2	1.24	245,000
RFM Corp.	0.9	0.98	0.9	0.98	480,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	56	55.5	56	31,700
San Miguel Corp. B	79	79	78.5	78.5	70,400
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	810,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.011	208,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	5,800,000
Ayala Corp.	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8,099,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	380,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	394,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.05	0.0525	0.047	0.048	21,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	30,000
APC Group Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.45	0.45	3,830,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.009	0.009	0.008	0.008	84,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	10,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	125,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.84	0.84	0.84	0.84	440,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	22	22	22	22	100
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.175	630,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.32	1.34	1.26	1.26	26,604,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1	401,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.23	0.23	1,340,000
CADP Group Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.1	1.1	4,811,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	290,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.59	0.59	0.56	0.57	350,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.45	4.15	4.15	4,748,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.055	0.06	1,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	46,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	10	10.5	10	10.25	980,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	57	57	56.5	57	859,200
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.24	0.24	130,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.11	0.115	31,640,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.74	1.78	1.66	1.74	6,318,000
Ionics Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.7	1.72	345,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	412,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.02	2.02	258,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,400,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.64	1.66	1.6	1.6	6,257,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	30,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	2	2	2	2	1,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.38	0.48	0.38	0.47	5,290,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.58	29,660,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.34	1,650,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.28	55,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	530,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.1	1.02	1.06	461,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.64	0.6	0.63	2,320,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	10,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	1,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.22	0.185	0.2	32,110,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	150,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	1,720,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.68	1.68	264,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	110,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.135	0.135	5,480,000
Pryce Corp.	0.3	0.35	0.3	0.35	20,050,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.58	1.62	1.42	1.46	36,543,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.2	1.22	1.14	1.14	4,115,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.62	1.72	1.58	1.68	21,314,000
Manila Jockey Club	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	15,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.39	1,750,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	17.5	17.75	17.25	17.5	329,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	8,100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.1	9.1	9	9	3,843,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.97	0.97	870,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	4,320,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.32	0.33	17,280,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.49	0.5	13,780,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.7	1.7	6,514,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.17	1,250,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.175	300,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	940,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	130,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	400,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	280,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	6,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.6	8.6	8.4	8.5	8,331,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	110,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	100,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	20,000,000
Atlas Cons Min & Dev't	6.6	6.6	6.4	6.4	234,000
Benguet Corp A	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	2,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	2,620,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.45	0.45	0.43	0.44	14,550,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.019	0.019	62,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.027	0.028	143,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.009	0.01	0.009	0.009	1,480,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.16	415,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.46	1.48	1.42	1.42	2,519,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	45	45	42	42.5	1,410,700
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.3	900,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	13,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	7,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	188,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	43,000,000
Pacifica	0.017	0.017	0.015	0.016	55,200,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.8	3	2.8	3	205,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.23	0.235	0.205	0.21	28,140,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.42	0.42	0.38	0.38	520,000

DISCLOSURES

FIRST Metro Investment Corp. scheduled its annual stockholders' meeting on April 26, 4 p.m. at the Metrobank Penthouse, 21st Floor, Metrobank Plaza, Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. All stockholders of record date March 14 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

***

GLOBE Telecom will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 4, 9 a.m. at Grand Ballroom, Hotel InterContinental Manila, Ayala Center, Makati City. Only stockholders of record date Feb. 16 are entitled to vote.

***

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 14, 4 p.m. in Makati City. Stockholders of record date April 15 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

***

AYALA Land Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 6, 9 a.m. at Hotel InterContinental Manila, Ayala Center, Makati City. Only stockholders of record date Feb. 18 are entitled to vote. Stock and transfer books of the corporation will be closed from Feb. 18 to 28. ***Compiled by Chona Galang, PDI Research***

SMC reviews bid ...

From page B1

Brewery.

Ms Arroyo earlier announced plans to sell the entire government stake, comprising a 27-percent share block awarded to it by the Supreme Court after a 17-year legal battle with business partners of the late deposed dictator Ferdinand Marcos, and shares held by two state-run pension funds. *With a report from AFP*

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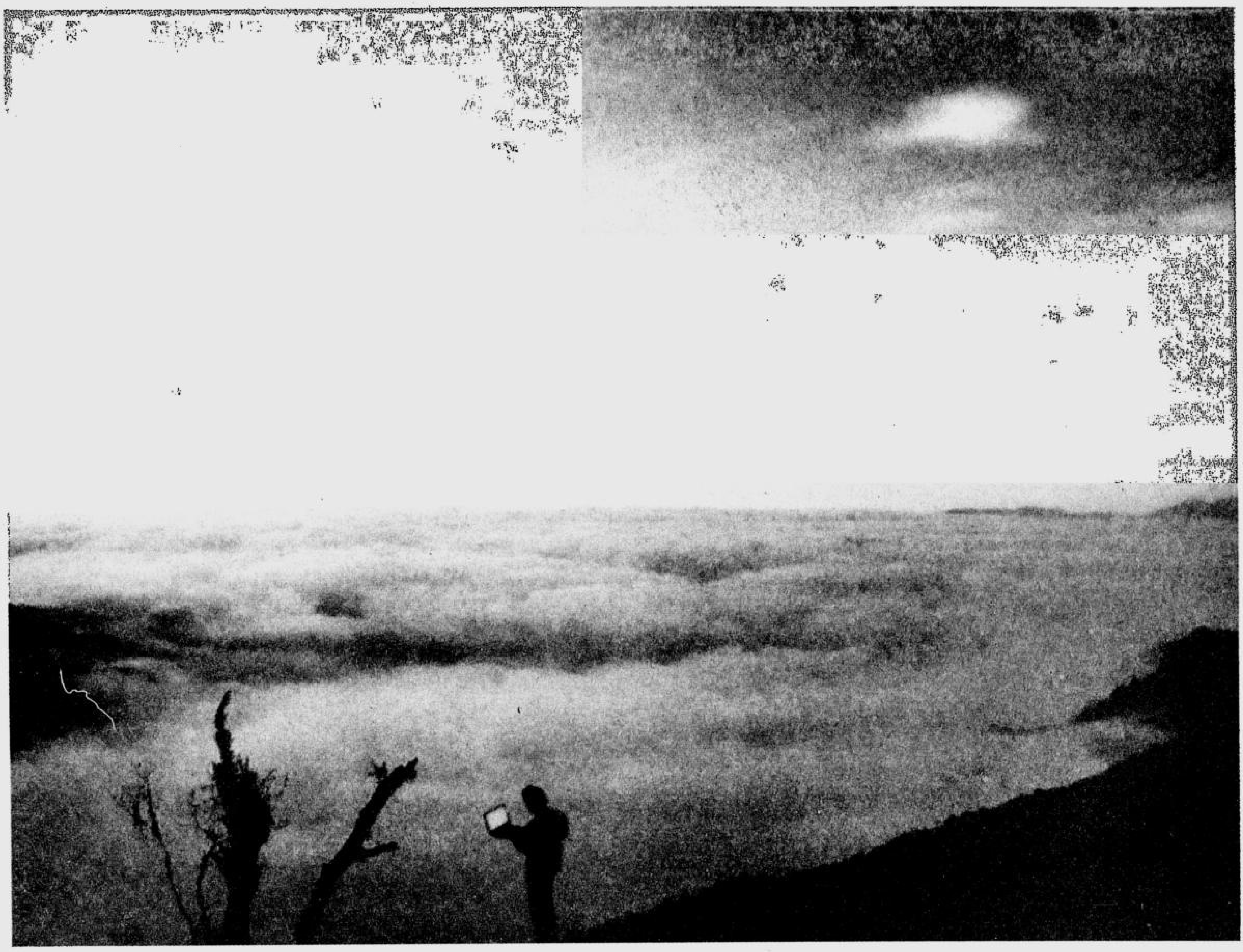


Before and After PLDT WeRoam

A World of Difference

Walter Ray Choi
South Luzon Expressway, Friday, 6:30am

It's a wee bit early on the highway and I've packed it all in: my contacts, files, my email. With the PLDT WeRoam aircard in my backpack you can say I've brought the entire office on my shoulders. Even on this, a precious holiday leading to a long weekend of diving in Anilao, I can safely say that I'll be connected at all times.

It wasn't always this way. Just a couple of years ago I was on the same road rounding a corner to a friend's beach house in Nasugbu when an office emergency came up. They were calling me back. Incredulous, I turned the wheel, gritted my teeth and headed back to Manila.

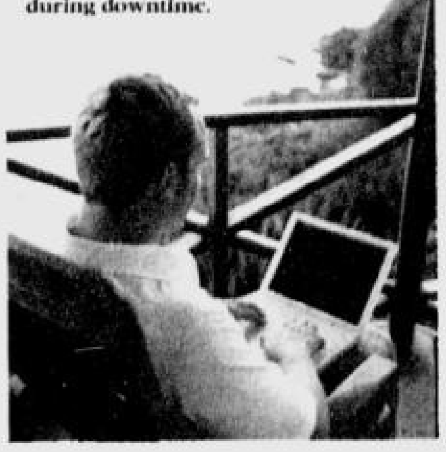
What was the emergency, you may ask? Well, I had to retrieve a file sent to my corporate LAN network, respond and send it back modified all on Outlook. It took me two hours and thirty minutes to drive back and do something all of fifteen minutes long.

It's, like night and day. PLDT WeRoam spells a world of difference anchored on the simple but dramatic capability of 24/7 internet and LAN connectivity. Anywhere I am, as long as I get a SMART signal, I'll get the web or my company network on my laptop thanks to the vastness of PLDT's wireless and broadband IP infrastructure.

In remote locations, people used to have to search high and low for an internet café just to hook up to the web. Today's world just doesn't allow for that. Personal time and work time were on the verge of being blurred of distinction but only because of intrusion. With PLDT WeRoam, I can personally say that the distinction has virtually disappeared through gentle assimilation. I can communicate and work with the office and clients in between dives.

I'm not the only one who will be feeling a renewed sense of liberation. PLDT WeRoam will work wonders for everybody's fun time. And I've recently gotten very serious about fun.

My friend downloads during downtime.



Kerpal Singh
Friday, 11:30 pm, North Luzon Expressway

The Philippine's newest and widest expressway is the last grand vestige of urban life I will see in the next few days. The trappings and advantages of the urban jungle are disappearing as fast as the smooth asphalt of my rearview mirror. As much as I want to, I can not leave the world behind, or else it may not be there when I return.

I have passed through not so memorable towns and cities, we hit the gravel track of the Banaue valley. My car passes above the clouds, and I begin to wonder how far I have left civilization. Buildings are replaced by a valley out of Shangri-La. I can't help but think of a lost world, and how lost I am in it.

I arrive at the center of the Sagada town, some 5000 feet above sea level. Ten hours since I left my terminal, I need to check my mail. The guesthouse I am staying in does not have a phone line. The lady behind the desk laughs as she tells me there isn't a single phone line in town.

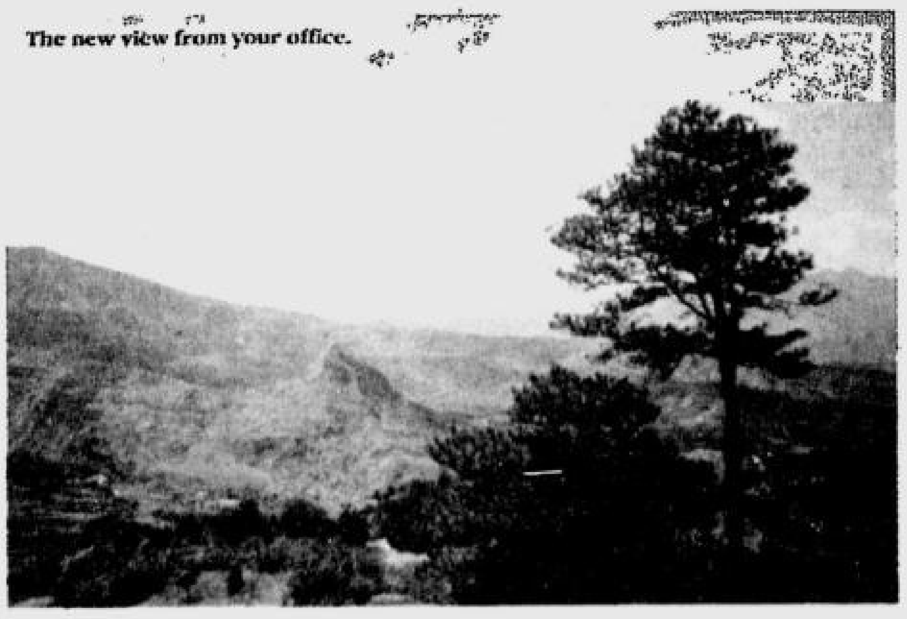
There is a single internet café for the whole tourist town. I rush over to check how the world has changed since I have been on the long ride. I get on the overpriced online monopoly that serves what is called the Philippines' most beautiful village. I have a hard time appreciating the view when I am freaking out about downloading my mail.

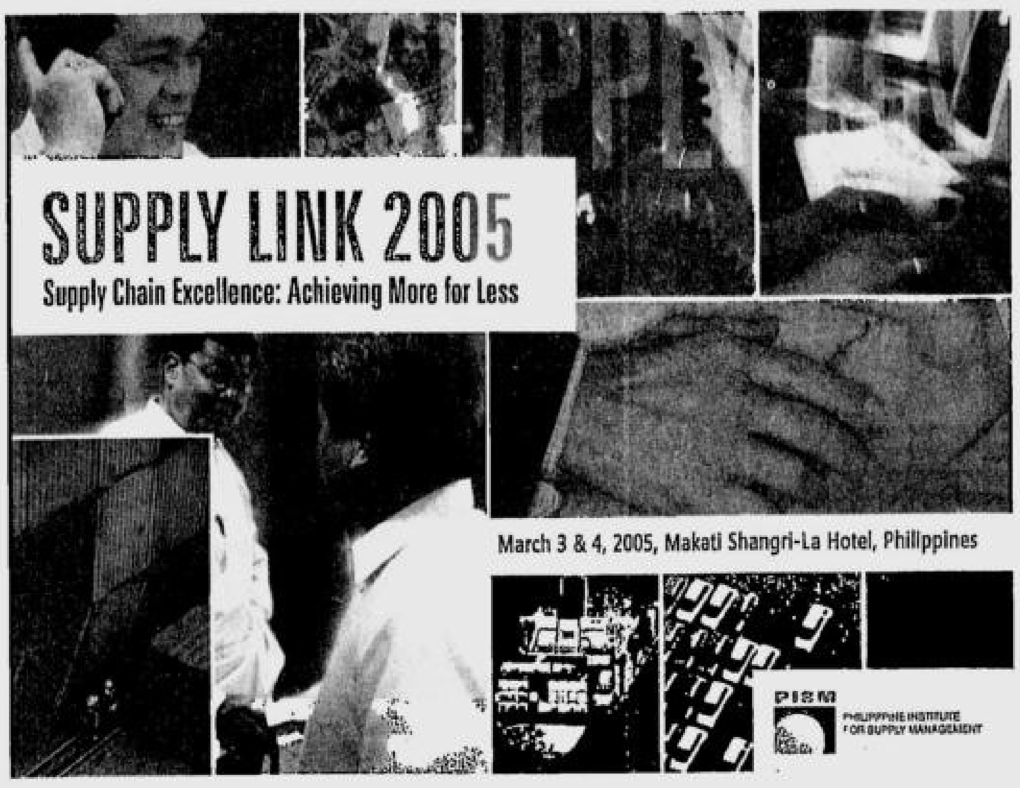
My homepage opens as slowly as a cobra trapped in the lid of its basket. The connection dies before I can even access my mail folder.

"The system is unstable," says the clerk. I ask him what that means. "It's unstable!" he reiterates gruffly. I ask him when they get back online. "I don't know. Maybe Tuesday?" he says giving me no reassurance. It helps I'm leaving Sunday, and the world could turn upside down by then.

I am stuck in the middle of so called paradise and all I can think of is what is happening in the world, most importantly, in my world. Surprisingly, I have full signal on my phone, even when I am on a mountain top trying to relax. My friend Walter Ray Choi tells me that come March 10, all I need is cell signal and I can keep connected through PLDT WeRoam. The locals tell me that even in the middle of the forest here their celphones work. Maybe by then I can relax and truly appreciate this beautiful place. Heck, I may just take my laptop camping.

The new view from your office.




SUPPLY LINK 2005
Supply Chain Excellence: Achieving More for Less
March 3 & 4, 2005, Makati Shangri-La Hotel, Philippines
PISM
PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE FOR SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

Supplylink 2005 is the 13th Annual Conference and Trade Exhibit to be staged by the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM). Supplylink assembles an effective marketing and learning opportunity to meet industry leaders, innovators, and investors within the country to gain valuable insights and introductions.

Considered as the country's largest gathering of top supply management professionals, Supplylink showcases the latest product innovations in the areas of office equipment, materials handling and storage, transportation and distribution, MRO supplies, IT applications, packaging systems, application, among others.

Through the years, PISM has been consistently providing its delegates the most stimulating, appropriate and relevant information in the purchasing and supply chain management context.

PISM Profile

FOUNDED in 1968, the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM), formerly known as Purchasing and Materials Management Association of the Philippines (PMMAP) remains to be at the forefront in the country's supply chain management excellence. PISM champions new systems, techniques and strategic practices.

From its 98 member companies during its first year, PISM has now close to 300 member companies coming from various industries located in Metro Manila and its environs, with 5 chapters to boot.

Through its seminars, industry group forums, general membership meetings, conferences and other activities, PISM plays an effective source of methods, technologies, ideas from the business world and also serves as a venue for benchmarking and networking.

PISM has re-stated its mission: "To be the key contributor to our member companies' success and to the country's global competitiveness by championing the supply management profession and the continuous development of its practitioners to the highest ethical and world-class standards".

PISM further envisions to be a world-class acclaimed prime mover and resource centre of supply chain management and leadership excellence in Asia.

True to its vision, PISM is continuously strengthening its alliances to international organizations. It is a CPM allied member of the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) based in Tempe, Arizona, USA and an affiliate of the International Federation of Purchasing and Supply Management (IFPSM) based in Netherlands and the International Trade Center-United Nations (ITC-UNCTAD CNUCED WTO OUC).

CPM Certification

PISM conducts review and exam programs for the Certified Purchasing Manager (CPM) as an allied member of the Institute for Supply Management (ISM) of the USA.

CPM Program is specifically designed for experienced supply managers, with a focus on managerial and leadership skills, plus a variety of specialized functions.

Seminars

PISM values the professional development of each member company. To achieve this, PISM has lined up several career enhancement programs aimed to provide member companies of means to improve the quality of their products and services and respective organizations.

Diploma in Purchasing and Supply Management

The six-module, 22-day post-graduate program was launched in partnership with the De La Salle University - College of St. Benilde School of Professional and Continuing Education in February 1, 2003.

The program is designed on a modular system and is intended for professionals and fresh college graduates who are new to the purchasing and supply management function. Each module completed entitles each student with a certificate while completion of all modules entitles each student with a diploma.

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration Major in Purchasing and Supply Chain Management

Last March 2004, PISM in partnership with the University of Makati proudly produced its first batch of graduates of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Purchasing and Supply Chain Management.

It is the first college degree program in purchasing and supply chain management in Asia. Composed of 13 major subjects and a total of 1,000 hours of OJT, the course aims to equip its graduates with a working knowledge of purchasing and supply chain management by transforming the classroom setup into a training ground of the students as the PDC trainors transfer their knowledge based on years of professional experience.

PISM SCHEDULE OF SEMINARS:

SEMINAR TITLE	INCLUSIVE DATE/S
Strategic Purchasing or Procurement Planning	March 9 – 11, 2005
Advanced Warehousing Practices	March 31 – April 1, 2005
Measuring & Evaluating Purchasing Performance	April 6 – 7, 2005
Auditing the Purchasing Function	April 8, 2005
Group Purchasing	April 13 – 14, 2005
Ethics in Purchasing	April 15, 2005
The Law on Procurement & Contract Management	April 21 – 22, 2005
E-Procurement	April 27 – 28, 2005
Green Purchasing	April 29, 2005
Effective Negotiation Techniques for Buyers	May 5 – 6, 2005
Fundamentals of Warehousing Operations	May 12 – 13, 2005
Procurement in International Logistics Operations	May 19 – 20, 2005
Import/Export	June 2 – 3, 2005
Meeting of the Minds: A Negotiation Workshop	June 9 – 10, 2005

Venue: PISM Seminar Room
Unit 1706-A East Tower PSE Centre, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Contact Person: Mary Ann Punzalan
Tel. Nos.: (632) 634-5955; 634-5942 Fax No.: (632) 634-6348
E-mail: anne@pism.org
For more information on our seminars and training programmes, please visit our website at www.pism.org. Course outlines can be viewed from the Professional Development page.

Messages

MY cordial greetings to the good men and women of the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM) on the occasion of your 13th National Conference and Trade Exhibit entitled Supplylink 2005.

With the theme, "Supply Chain Excellence: Achieving More for Less," this show is expected to demonstrate the latest global trends in supply management. It is a great opportunity for our people in trade and industry to gather information on purchasing and materials management profession.

Projects like this contribute to creating a climate that is conducive to business, economic activity and job opportunities for our people.

I am confident that with your help, we will achieve our ten-point agenda to beat the odds toward positive change. By being an active player in national trade and economy, you also help our nation in surpassing challenges and obstacles ahead.

May you have a successful conference and exhibit. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

(SGD.) GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

IN BEHALF of the Philippine Institute for Supply Management, my warmest greetings to the delegates, speakers, sponsors, guests and trade partners of Supplylink 2005.

Already on its 13th year, our theme "Supply Chain Excellence: Achieving More for Less" is very appropriate with the trends and challenges we are experiencing. Companies are more and more building a culture of leaner organizations and reduced costs, but at the same time improved efficiencies and output. Now, more than ever, supply chain management plays a very critical role in business strategies of every organization.

The power-packed technical sessions, plenary/round table discussions, and keynote presentations with guest speakers who are very well respected in their fields will surely provide all of us the needed inputs for really achieving more for less. Of course, we should not forget the exhibition of the latest products and services showcasing the new technologies available in the market today.

Thank you very much for being part of this event. Indeed, we are all very excited with the limitless opportunities that await us at Supplylink 2005!

(SGD.) MINA M. BATO
President, PISM

IN BEHALF of the organizing committee, I welcome with great honor and pleasure, all delegates, sponsors, exhibitors and guests to Supplylink 2005, the Philippine Institute for Supply Management's (PISM) annual conference and trade exhibit.

This year's theme, 'Supply Chain Excellence: Achieving More for Less" aptly reflects the challenge that supply management professionals face in these most trying of times.

This gathering indeed comes at an opportune time and I believe that the conference will be able to provide you with fresh insights and useful inputs that will allow you to showcase your creativity as professionals and our collective resiliency as a nation.

Thank you and I wish all of us a successful conference.

(SGD.) MINERVA M. AGAS; C.P.M.
PISM 1st Vice President

WITH pride and pleasure, we present to you, our members, delegates, speakers, guests, sponsors, exhibitors, trade partners and friends, the SUPPLYLINK 2005 entitled "Supply Chain Excellence: Achieving More for Less".

The conference hopes to achieve one of the institutes' key objectives, that is, to equip its members and other practitioners of supply chain management particularly in the field of procurement and materials management with the new perspectives, opportunities and linkages that will enable them to focus with confidence to drive their companies to greater competitiveness through supply chain innovation.

Supply Chain Excellence is a challenge for us to innovate and look for new and better ways to execute our functional strategies.

The current economic environment demands more and more from us, supply chain managers, in terms of value creation and contribution, achieving and doing more for less.

I am confident that you will find the conference topics an added foundation to enhance your expertise in the field of supply chain management.

On behalf of the officers and directors of the Philippine Institute for Supply Management and the Supplylink 2005 committee, WELCOME!

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Supplylink Chairperson

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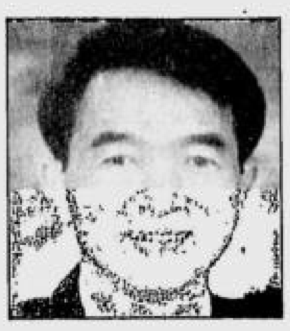

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STAKEHOLDERS' INVOLVEMENT

Foreign donors vow continued support for RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINES can rely on the global donor community, which is set to meet in Davao next week, to help cover its funding requirements and thus cushion the adverse impact of sovereign credit rating downgrades on borrowing costs, said an official of the World Bank in an interview.

But the foreign donors led by the World Bank agreed with the government that the so-called "Consultative Group" meetings, which are presently used as a forum for official development assistance (ODA) pledging sessions, should focus more on the Philippine government's reform agenda

In an interview with the INQUIRER yesterday, World Bank country representative Joachim von Amsberg said the two-day meetings, now renamed Philippine Development Forum (PDF), should be restructured to also involve other stakeholders such as the business sector, nongovernment organizations, lawmakers and academicians.

These meetings, attended by bilateral and multilateral donors, are organized every other year to shape up ODA programs. The meetings are co-chaired by the World Bank with the Department of Finance.

"There's so much goodwill and patience on the part of the international donor community and we'd like to know how we can do more. We want to do whatever we can to be more effective development partners and help," Von Amsberg said.

He said the five "huge" topics to be discussed during the forthcoming meetings in Davao on March 7-8 were: fiscal reforms, investment climate and growth, social reforms/social progress, governance and local governance.

Von Amsberg said the donors were hoping to know more about the government's reform agenda, such as the progress of new tax measures. An improvement in revenue generation also means creating more room in the budget for much-needed development expenditures.

"Everything has to be within the government's fiscal adjustment (program). We are making the funds available at a lower interest rate and longer term than if they were to get it from commercial sources," Von Amsberg said.

Additional ODA resources, he said, could in turn reduce the government's fiscal costs.

"In that sense, if the revenues are rising at a reasonable rate, international support can be more effective," he said.

Von Amsberg said the donor meetings were likewise renamed as PDF to reflect the new format.

"If you think of a middle-income country like the Philippines, the financial role of international partners is actually pretty small. The program is driven by the government's owns plans and development efforts and I feel that the format we've chosen now reflects that," he said.

"It's no longer a consultative group among donors but a forum of all stakeholders ... Next week, we'll hopefully make a contribution to making an agreement with different stakeholders," he said.

For instance, the donors expect better appreciation from the business sector to support better tax collections in return for a better investment climate and macroeconomic stability.

"And for the international donor community, it's saying that we're willing to make a much more larger financial contribution to the country if that's supporting the overall package of reforms that's being discussed—how can we as international partners fit in there," he said.

He added that the donor community would not be deterred by the unfavorable credit ratings on the country.

"We are very different from rating agencies. Rating agencies get paid by investors and they represent in the sense the interest of investors," he said.

"We are development agencies and our purpose is not to assess but to help a country's core priorities," he said.

Creditor backs LRT-1 capacity expansion

By Clarissa S. Batino

JAPAN Bank for International Cooperation yesterday said the Arroyo administration had deprived itself of almost P500 million in potential revenue in three years that the Light Rail Transit Authority was unable to expand LRT 1's capacity.

LRTA administrator Mel Robles said the agency was trying to secure a P500-million budget cover for the expansion project for the line that runs from Monumento to Baclaran.

"We already have P250 million from Congress to cover this year's budget for the capacity expansion. What we need now is the cover for 2006 and 2007, which is about P500 million," said Robles.

The LRTA wants to start the $150-million Line 1 capacity expansion as soon as possible so that by 2008, the railway agency would be able to realize increased ridership and higher revenue.

Expanding the capacity of Line 1 was also a requirement before creditors would agree to finance the extension of this line from Baclaran all the way to Cavite.

Robles said by the middle of the month, the capacity expansion to be undertaken by Sumitomo Corp. and Itochu Corp. should proceed because the JBIC would end its fiscal year this month. Letting the project lapse into the next fiscal year may be more costly, he added.

The Japanese financing agency committed to lend 18 billion yen (roughly P9 billion) mainly to increase Line 1's passenger capacity from 27,000 per hour per direction to 40,000 passengers per hour per direction. The loan carries a soft interest rate of one percent yearly and is payable in 40 years with a 10-year grace period.

Osama Murata, JBIC chief representative in Manila, said the delay in the implementation of the $150-million capacity expansion of Line 1 had increased the cost of the project, resulted in loss of potential revenue, and affected investors' confidence.

The much-delayed capacity expansion being funded by JBIC under the Obuchi Fund may be scrapped if the LRTA will not come up with the counterpart funding for the project.

The transportation department said its budget for 2006 was fully committed to several airport and coastal projects.

"Three years ago, it (the expanded line) should have started operating," said Murata.

JBIC, he said, had spent about P750 million to pay consultants for the project.

Murata ruled out a re-bidding despite allegations that the bidding for the capacity expansion was riddled with irregularities. Marubeni Corp. was a losing bidder.

Petron putting up two 230-kv power substations

By Abigail L. Ho

IN PREPARATION for the full operation of two new facilities in its Bataan complex, industry leader Petron Corp. is setting up a 230-kilovolt substation that will help ensure reliable power supply in its refinery.

The company yesterday announced the installation of the new substation in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

To boost its profits, increase its operational efficiencies and cut its dollar spending, the company decided to put up an Isomerization Unit and a Gasoil Hydrotreater at its Bataan refinery.

The recently commissioned 10,000-barrels-a-day Isomerization Unit will allow Petron to produce Clean Air Act-compliant gasoline right here in the country.

As of now, not an oil firm in the country can produce locally the isomerate blend needed to make their gasoline CAA-compliant.

With this new facility, which forms part of the company's $100-million refinery upgrade, Petron cannot only refine its own CAA-compliant gasoline but it can also supply the product to its competitors.

Another component of the refinery upgrade project is the Gasoil Hydrotreater, which will come on stream by April.

"With these two units, we will be the only oil company in the country that can serve our market's demand for CAA-compliant fuels entirely from local production. These facilities will also increase our edge over competition as we eliminate our need for product imports," Petron president and chief executive Khalid Al-Faddagh said earlier.

The company will also be constructing a 1,700-metric ton liquefied petroleum gas spherical tank in its Mandaue terminal to help boost storage capacity there.

This year, Petron has earmarked P572.2 million for routine maintenance and rehabilitation works on its depots, service stations and other facilities all over the country, in a bid to provide better service to its customers and to further boost its profits.

Based on its audited financial statement, Petron last year posted a net income of P3.4 billion, nearly 10 percent higher than the 2003 profit of P3.1 billion.

Last year's gross sales jumped to P147.4 billion from 2003's P110.7 billion, on the back of better domestic and international sales.

With world oil prices soaring, Petron's export revenues contributed more than 40 percent to its net income in 2004.

"Product prices in the Asia were at their peak in 2004, and we aimed to capture the incremental margins, particularly through exports of mixed xylene," Al-Faddagh said. "Our export sales bring us dollar revenues, which provide us with a natural hedge against fluctuations in the local currency."

ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR
Socorro C. Ramos, founder and general manager of National Book Store Inc., was named the 2005 Entrepreneur of the Year Philippines in an awards banquet held last Friday at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Ramos, 81, was recognized for building a business that has become an institution in the past 65 years. As the winner of the national title, she will represent the Philippines in the World Entrepreneur of the Year Awards 2005 in Monte Carlo, Monaco on May 28.

With her are (from left), SGV chair and president David Balangue, Ernst & Young chair and CEO James S. Turley, chair of the board of judges Cesar E.A. Virata (president of the Bankers' Association of the Philippines), SGV founder Washington Sycip and World Entrepreneur of the Year 2004 and first Entrepreneur of the Year Philippines awardee Tony Tan Caktiong (president and CEO of Jollibee Foods Corp.).

Alsons, Sunfields start Batangas residential project

ALSONS Land Corp., in partnership with Sunfields Realty Development Inc., is building the residential phase of the Lima Township to meet the housing demand of industrial employees at Lima Technology Center (LTC) and residents of Malvar and Lipa City in Batangas province.

The residential phase covers 115,440 square meters and will be developed into a Spanish-inspired subdivision that will take advantage of the Tagaytay-grade climate of the Malvar/Lipa City area. Groundbreaking for this township phase, known as the Campo Verde, will be held today.

Landowner Alsons Land and Sunfields Realty, the project developer, recently signed the joint venture agreement covering the residential phase. The pact was signed by Alsons Land chair Tomas I. Alcantara, Sunfields Realty chair Noel Gonzales and president Manuel J. Colayco.

As a major development project in Calabarzon, the Lima Township seeks to meet the needs of township residents for industrial, residential, commercial, cultural and religious facilities.

The township facilities, including the eight-year old LTC as the export and industrial processing zone, are linked by roads but are separated for ecological balance from the other phases by parks, trees and open spaces.

Under the plan, 683 units of three types of house models will be offered. There will be 329 units of the Casa Condesa on a 90 square-meter lot with a single-attached, one-story house of 36 square meters; 280 units of the Casa Duquesa on a 100 square-meter lot with single-detached, two-story house of 50 square meters, and 74 units of the Casa Reina on a 120-square meter lot with a single-detached two-story house of 80 square meters.

The amenities of Campo Verde at Lima include landscaped entrance gate, community clubhouse, landscaped park and garden, basketball court, 24-hour security and concrete perimeter fence.

Basic amenities include electric power distribution, underground drainage system, water distribution system, concrete roads, curb and gutters, and provision for telephone facilities.

Target selling prices are from P800,000 to P1.6 million per house and lot package, with Pag-ibig financing.

A property management group will maintain the Campo Verde subdivision by incorporating an efficient garbage disposal system. The disposal system will have three components : waste segregation at source, collection and disposal of segregated waste, and processing of biodegradable waste.

For the needs of the rank-and-file workers of LTC, the socialized (and economic) housing project will be built as a separate project in Barangay San Pedro, Malvar.

Sunfields will apply the same standards for construction, property management and waste disposal in developing the economic housing development project.

House-and-lot packages will range from P225,000 to P500,000.

Alsons Land is a member of the Alcantara Group of Companies.

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Trade alliance seeks tariff recalibration

LEAD convenor of the multi-sectoral Fair Trade Alliance Wigberto E. Tañada yesterday said he would strongly push for the suspension of the tariff reduction program and seek a selective recalibration of tariff rates in a bid to save domestic industries and the farm sector from a self-destructive tariff regime.

The former senator said the economy had been severely damaged by the past and present administration's fast-tracked and indiscriminate trade liberalization policy.

"By liberalizing too fast, we have unfavorably brought the country to a position of extreme disadvantage," he said.

The country's applied tariff on MFN now averages 7 percent, 8 percent for agriculture and 3.4 percent for industry. Under the Afta-CEPT (Asean Free Trade Area-Common Effective Preferential Tariff) program, the average applied rates are even lower,

"The other countries, on the other hand, are steadfastly standing their ground and are managing to cling on to tariff rates ranging from 20 to 40 percent or even higher. Over the past 10 years we have cut down our average MFN applied rates by more than 69 percent."

Tañada's statement comes ahead of a forthcoming review by the WTO Secretariat of the country's compliance with WTO rules and a comprehensive tariff review called for by Ambassador to the WTO Manuel Teehankee.

Tañada stressed that his proposal for a suspension of tariff cuts and selective re-calibration of tariffs were within the rules of the WTO, stressing that these moves were "now very urgent" in the face of the weak performance of the industrial and agricultural sectors.

Tañada said, "President GMA cannot postpone any longer her decision on the issue so vital to our economic recovery and development."

He said that the coming tariff review would give the government the opportunity to correct its mistakes which were still being committed up to now.

"We have effectively implemented a unilateral tariff disarmament, so now we no longer have any bargaining chips," Tañada said, quoting former WTO Appellate Justice Florentino Feliciano.

Tanada added that the country could no longer compete in the global market and even in the local market.

"Aside from the fact that the safety nets promised to our local industries are not effectively in place we also have problems on technical and outright smuggling and other unfair trading practices," Tañada stressed.

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Deposit Amount (in pesos)	Interest Rates (%) 30 days	60 days	90 days	1 year
100,000 - 499,999	4.625	4.750	4.875	5.000
500,000 - 999,999	5.250	5.375	5.500	5.750
1.0MM - 4,999,999	5.500	5.750	5.875	6.000
5.0MM - 9,999,999	5.750	6.000	6.125	6.250
10 million and up	6.000	6.250	6.500	6.750

[illegible] are subject to change without prior notice.
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People, Events & Products

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

Intelligent real estate the Cathay Land way

THOSE interested in buying a home use one major guideline: location, location, location. To the truly knowledgeable, location is simply one mere aspect in the long list of real estate criteria. Wise homeowners are like clever private detectives - they research and investigate the people behind the project. Those investing in their dream home can sleep better at night knowing their hard-earned money is in safe hands.

In the case of South Forbes Golf City, an innovative 250-hectare satellite city strategically located in the booming Santa Rosa-Silang-Tagaytay growth area, brokers and project specialists have no problem at all when faced with questions regarding the background and credibility of its proponent.

It is because at the center of this significant undertaking is developer Cathay Land, one of the fastest rising real estate development firms in the Philippines. With successful projects and recognized players as its affiliates, Cathay Land has established an untarnished reputation and strong dedication to its social responsibility - that of building a better environment, home and lifestyle for every Filipino family.

Cathay Land, with over 500 hectares of land throughout Calabarzon and Metro Manila, remains committed to the growth and development of the country. Its impeccable track record spanning 10 years has already earned the respect and esteem of the business community. Its successful ventures include the 36-storey Astoria Plaza building in Ortigas, the Cavite Light Industrial Park in Silang, the 25-storey twin Dynasty Towers in Manila and the 690-unit Regency Executive Townhomes in Dasmariñas, Cavite. These establishments have made immense contributions to their communities by generating employment and enhancing products and services within their municipalities.

Cathay Land is part of the Cathay Group of Companies founded by Ambassador John K.C. Ng, the immediate past president of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry. It is the biggest federation of Chinese Filipino businessmen with a network of 170 chapters nationwide. He was recently appointed Presidential Envoy for Chinese Affairs by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Affiliates of the company include three of the country's top steel manufacturing companies: Cathay Metal Corp, Amalgamated Iron Works, and Cathay Pacific Steel Corp. For almost 40 years, these companies have been respected industry leaders in providing various steel products for the construction industry. Other affiliates include Eurotiles Industrial Corp - one of the leading names in the manufacture, importation and distribution of ceramic tiles in the country. The group has a piggery farm -- Cathay Farms Development Inc in Tanza, Cavite - and operates a hotel: the Astoria Plaza at the Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Other member companies of the Cathay Group are also leading players in the retail industry. Both Ceramic Plaza and Federal Hardware are market leaders in the ceramic tile, hardware building material and home improvement retail business. PC Express was named as the leading computer retailer for the year 2003 and 2004. Thus, all the companies connected with the Cathay Group are leading names in their respective fields and are continuously making their mark with breakthrough products and services.

Topping Cathay Land's stellar accomplishments is South Forbes Golf City, the fruition of Cathay Land's service-oriented consciousness. Its strategic location makes it a prime property. Recreation and commercial centers (Enchanted kingdom, Paseo de Santa Rosa, and soon, the South Forbes Golf and Leisure Club), educational institutions (De La Salle-Canlubang, Ateneo Graduate School-Paseo de Santa Rosa, St. Scholastica's-Westgrove, Don Bosco and Brent International School) and technology and manufacturing firms (Ford, Toyota, Honda, Coca-Cola, Matsushita Electric's Panasonic, Fujitsu and Tsukiden) all provide the necessary setting for work and play to be centralized within the area. Apart from combining the modernity of the metropolis with the quaint charm of the country, South Forbes Golf City defines intelligent investment for those who wish to live the good life. For inquiries, please call (02) 635-8108 or (02) 636-4647 and visit www.cathaylandinc.com.

Samsung SGH-D500 wins GSM Association's award for Best Mobile Handset 2005

SAMSUNG is proud to announce that it has won the GSM Association's award for Best Mobile Handset with its SGH-D500. The award, announced at a ceremony at the 3GSM World Congress last night, recognizes excellence in handset design and innovation.

Samsung was shortlisted, SGH-D500 for Best Handset and SGH-Z107 for Best 3GSM Handset categories respectively.

The Best Handset award was finally announced at GSM Award dinner, Les Ambassadeurs, Palais des Festivals, Cannes on Feb 15, out of 61 nominees among 480 initial entries. This year's award is more meaningful celebrating the 10th Anniversary Awards Ceremony from 1996.

The SGH-D500 delivers the latest multimedia and imaging technology in a compact and elegant soft-touch slide-up style. A powerful business device as well as a multimedia companion, the SGH-D500 incorporates all of Samsung's leading technology into one package: a 1.3 Megapixel camera with flash; video recording with 60 minutes of storage; Bluetooth, email, and syncML connectivity; a speakerphone with enhanced voice clarity; an MP3 music player; 262K TFT screen; 64 polyphonic ring tones; and 96MB of internal user memory.

Accepting the award, Woonsub Kim, executive vice president of Samsung Telecommunications Network commented: "We are delighted to receive this award for Best Handset for the SGH-D500 phone. Samsung is above all focused on delivering the best possible user experience in all of its mobile products. Like the SGH-D500, the handsets that Samsung is showing at 3GSM this year feature rich media capabilities that really harness the power of GSM networks, and combine this with leading style."

CHIPPY ROCKS BAGUIO

Chippy, the official barkada treat, jumpstarts the summer season with the second of its Gimikada blowouts for 2005, this time at the Flower Festival in Baguio. The Gimikada bash in the country's Summer Capital, which will be held in Session Road on March 4, will showcase some of the country's hottest bands including Sandwich, Imago, Chicosci, Kapatid and Baguio's very own Session Road, Zoom Zoom Lunacy and Brew Taterd. In addition, fun games and prizes await the audience. Chippy joins the major festivals as its takes Gimikada to different parts of the country. This series started with a two-day concert during the Sinulog in Cebu, which highlighted such bands as Kjwan, Chicosci, Imago, Kapatid, Urban Dub, Smooth Friction and Malaya. Photo shows Chicosci, jamming with Kapatid at the Gimikada Bash in Cebu's Aduhan Dos parking lot during the Sinulog Festival.

PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONA
Humanity

PIFS 2005 OPENS

Trade Secretary Juan Santos presses the button signaling the opening of the Philippine International Furniture Show (PIFS) 2005 at the World Trade Center and the Philippine Trade Training Center. The four-day show will run up to Thursday (March 3). At right is PIFS 2005 overall chair Randolph Viray.

BITS & Clips

Eiga Sai '05

THE JAPANESE Film Festival Eiga Sai 2005 showcases the acclaimed works of legendary director-screenwriter Akira Kurosawa. Admission is free of charge. It will have regular screenings at the CCP Dream Theater on March 2 to 6, and Equitable PCI Bank Tower II Antonio Molino Hall on March 7 to 11, Monday to Friday at 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., and on Saturday and Sunday at 1 p.m., 4 p.m., and 7 p.m. For inquiries, contact The Japan Foundation, Manila at 811-6155 to 58; fax 811-6153; or email at email@jfmo.org.ph.

Lectures on Animal Care, Behavior and Bioethics

DR. Michael W. Fox, a veterinarian and bioethicist, will hold lectures on on Animal Care, Behavior and Bioethics at the University of the Philippines from March 2 to 4. Dr. Fox's visit and lectures are being sponsored by the University of the Philippines' Bioethics Training Project, Bodhi Vegetarian Restaurant and the Philippine Animal Welfare Society. His talks will be at the National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education (Nisme) Auditorium in UP Diliman, with the following scheduled topics: March 2: Animal Awareness, Emotions, Care and Rights Cat and Dog Behavior, Development and Communication; March 3: Bioethics - Linking Animal Rights, Conservation and Human Interests Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology in Agriculture; March 4: "Eating with a Conscience": Factory Farming, Food Animal Suffering. Environmental and Public Health Costs, and the Organic and Humane Alternatives. Admission is free. For more information, contact UP Bioethics 926-1008 or PAWS 475-1688

Otap celebrates 40th year

THE OCCUPATIONAL Therapy Association of the Philippines Inc (Otap Inc) will be celebrating its 40th anniversary with a two-day convention on March 4 to 5 at the White Rock Hotel in Subic Zambales. With its theme "Occupation: Our Foundation, Our Future", the convention will feature local and foreign speakers and will have several workshops, short courses and paper presentations with topics ranging from handwriting and other learning difficulties in children, to the use of computer-aided technology in assessment, intervention and education. For more information, visit www.otapinc.org, otap_inc@yahoo.com or call Archie Gozon at 0927-2207167.

Sony solutions: Making your life easier

YOU fell in love with the Sony Handycam when you filmed your child's birth its sharp image and clear high-quality sound captured that special priceless moment. Fast forward a bit - you were also able to catch in its full reality, color and warmth your child's delivery when you printed them on your Sony Photo Printer and arranged the photos in a baby album. You were able to share the whole experience with the family by just inserting your Sony Memory Stick in the slot of your Sony Grand Wega and everyone was able to watch your baby's birth in High-Definition color. Your parents in the US wanted to see their new granddaughter's birth, so you edited and burned your video on CD using Sony's Picture Package and mailed it to them.

Complicated and expensive? Not at all with Sony Solutions. For Sony offers a wide range of products, combinations and synergies that bring you the full enjoyment of Sony. From Sony, you get minimum or zero hassles; instead, you reap the full value of your investment.

The Sony Handycam, the Sony Photo Printer, the Sony Memory Stick, the Sony Grand Wega - all these products spell the unique edge that comprise the many facets of Sony Solutions. No other company brings you products that work as seamlessly as Sony can. The Sony Solutions concept can help you maximize the features of your Sony products with utmost ease and consistently peak performance.

With the varied features of Sony products, there are limitless combinations that one can come up with. Sony stands unsurpassed as inventor, developer, pioneer or market leader in digital cameras, video cameras, laptops, mobile phones, audio visual products, storage devices, television and other technological marvels of modern life.

Sony foresees that the following Sony Solutions will become quite popular among its loyal consumers. The Picture Package Sony Solution allows easy and basic editing of photos and videos taken with the Cyber-shot and Handycam. With the DVD Enjoyment Sony Solutions users can shoot images and visuals with their Cyber-shot and Handycam, watch them on their Sony DVD Player and Sony Grand Wega and burn copies with the Sony DVD burner. For ultimate convenience, the Sony Solutions Direct Print will make it possible to shoot with the Sony Cyber-shot, save the images on the Sony Duo and print them directly using the Sony Digital Printer. With the massive files accumulated by offices and homes, the Storage Sony Solutions is heaven sent. The Sony Duo memory stick and Sony Micro Vault are convenient devices for sharing big files. You can save bigger files from the reusable memory sticks and micro vaults onto the massive memory capacity of Sony Photo Vault for the photos that have piled up over the years. The Accessories Sony Solutions maximizes the features of the Cyber-shot, Handycam and Walkman with the usage of the different accessories. Finally, the Network Audio Sony Solutions is good news for music lovers. Sony has come up with the Sonic Stage, Sony's proprietary music management software that can be used for downloading, organizing and sharing music files. Just burn your chosen music list on a CD or Sony MiniDisc and play it using the Sony CD Walkman or Sony Mini Disc Player.

Keep on learning and maximizing the possibilities of Sony. This is just the beginning of your discovery of the boundless potentials of Sony Solutions in your life. Catch the Sony Solutions Exhibit at the Concourse Area, ground floor of SM Makati.

SOUTH OF MARKET HOLDS GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

Century Communities Corp-Meridien Development Group (CCC-MDG) recently held its ground breaking rites for its newest breakthrough development South of Market or Soma - a 39-storey twin tower residential development in Fort Bonifacio, Global City. Gracing the ceremony is Mayor Sigfridoo Tinga of Taguig (second from right) seen in photo congratulating Jose E.B. Antonio, chair of CCC-MDG. Also show are Ricardo Cuerva, chief executive officer, Meridien Development Group (left) and Commissioner Romeo Fabul of the Housing Land Use Regulatory Board.

PHILIPPINE MARKETING ASSOCIATION
AGORA YO 2005

UP JUNIOR MARKETING ASSOCIATION RECEIVES AWARD

The UP Junior Marketing Association (University of the Philippines-Diliman), was awarded Outstanding Marketing Association at the 2005 Agora Youth Awards Night. Shown are (from left) Raffy Villanueva (Harbortown Hotel), Gerard Penaflor (Nestlé Ice Cream), Ruby Ramores, (students) Patti Arellano, Anna Go, Liel Gardol, April Calingo, Cesca Sylvestre (UP JMA president), Charlene Coyukiat with Donald Lim (Inquirer) and Edw[illegible] Ma[illegible]anao ([illegible])

ProductFILES

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The healthy margarine

MEADOW Lea Cholesterol Free is made of canola and sunflower oils, nature's good oils. The monounsaturated oils in Meadow Lea provide the essential Omega 3 and 6 nutrients vital for growth and development. Australia's no. 1 spread contains monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats - the 'good fats' - that help lower cholesterol levels, in effect helping prevent heart disease. In contrast, saturated fats or the 'bad fats' found in other cholesterol free margarine brands tend to increase blood cholesterol. Meadow Lea is a product of Goodman Fielder International, one of Australia's biggest food conglomerates. It is available in leading supermarkets and grocery stores nationwide.

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region 01
San Juan, La Union

Tel. No.: (072)242-59-09 & (072)700-25-79
Web site: www.nfa.gov.ph
E-mail Address: nfa-region1@sflu.com
Fax No.: (072) 242-59-07 & (072) 242-59-08

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

FOR INTEGRATED CARGO HANDLING SERVICES FOR NFA REGION 01

The National Food Authority, NFA Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union invites qualified Integrated Cargo Handling Services Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the provision of Integrated Cargo Handling Services in the discharging of more or less 50,000 MT or 1,000,000 bags rice imports for the year 2005, at Poro Port, San Fernando City and delivery to designated warehouses within La Union to include but not limited to arrastre, stevedoring, wharfage, maintenance and security fee, hauler's pass, truckscaling, and trucking with an Approved Budget for the Contract of P20,391,525.00

The Schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE
1. Advertisement First Publication Second Publication	 February 24, 2005 March 3, 2005
2. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	February 28-March 9, 2005 (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
3. Pre-Bidding Conference	March 10, 2005 (10:00 a.m.)
4. Issuance of Minutes of Pre-Bidding Conference	March 13, 2005
5. Deadline for the Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	March 22, 2005 (10:00 a.m.)

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents shall be obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P5,000.00.

The pre-bid conference and bidding proper shall be conducted at the NFA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, NFA Office Building, San Juan, La Union.

The eligibility of prospective bidders shall be determined using simple "Pass/Fail criteria and shall be considered as either "eligible" or "ineligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Passed" for all the requirements, he shall be considered "eligible". If the prospective bidder is rated "Failed" in any one of the requirements, he shall be considered ineligible.

A single stage bidding will be adopted using a simple pass/fail criteria for the evaluation. The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously three (3) envelopes, one containing the eligibility requirements and two(2) envelopes containing bidding documents. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instructions to Bidders.

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidders largest contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA AND /OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman Ruben S. Rimando or RBAC Secretariat Ms. Gloria Dacian at the Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union or at Tel. Nos. (072) 242-59-09 or (072) 700-25-79.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO, CESO VI**
Assistant Regional Manager
RBAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 24 & March 3, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction of the following commodities.

A. US Long Grains Hard Milled White (4% brokens) under 2004 USPL-480 Title 1 Program:

Commodity	Volume	Indicative Price	Location
Non-fortified and Iron fortified Rice	57,010 MT more or less	P1,330.00/bag	NFA-NCR and Region III Warehouses

B. Vietnam White Rice (20% brokens)

Commodity	Volume	Indicative Price	Location
Vietnam White Rice	460 MT more or less	P850.00/bag	Minprocor Whse, Del Monte Ave., Q.C.

The date, time and place of pre-auction and auction conferences are as follows:

	Pre-Auction		Auction Proper		
	Date	Time	Date	Time	Place
Commodity A (US Rice)	March 8 March 15	10:00 AM 10:00 AM	March 11 March 18	10:05 AM 10:05 AM	NFA Boardroom, 10th Flr., Matimyas Bldg., 101 E Rodriguez Sr., Ave., Q.C.
Commodity B (Vietnam Rice)	March 8 March 15	2:00 PM 2:00 PM	March 11 March 18	2:05 PM 2:05 PM	– do –

To qualify, all interested bidders are required to submit the following documents:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and/or milling).
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities thereto.
c. Offer must be accompanied by Bid Bond, equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Cashier's or Manager's check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Metro Manila

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting March 8, 2005 at DMO OCD, 5th Floor from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For any inquiries, please contact Ms. Espie Tecson at tel. nos. 712-15-72 and 712-17-08.

Bid documents will be available on March 8, 2005 and March 15, 2005 to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P3,000.00 for commodity A and P1,000.00 for Commodity B, respectively.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) CONRADO DL. IBAÑEZ
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – March 3 & 4, 2005)

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NAKANO TONYEH INTERNATIONAL, INC.
Is in need of:

QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER

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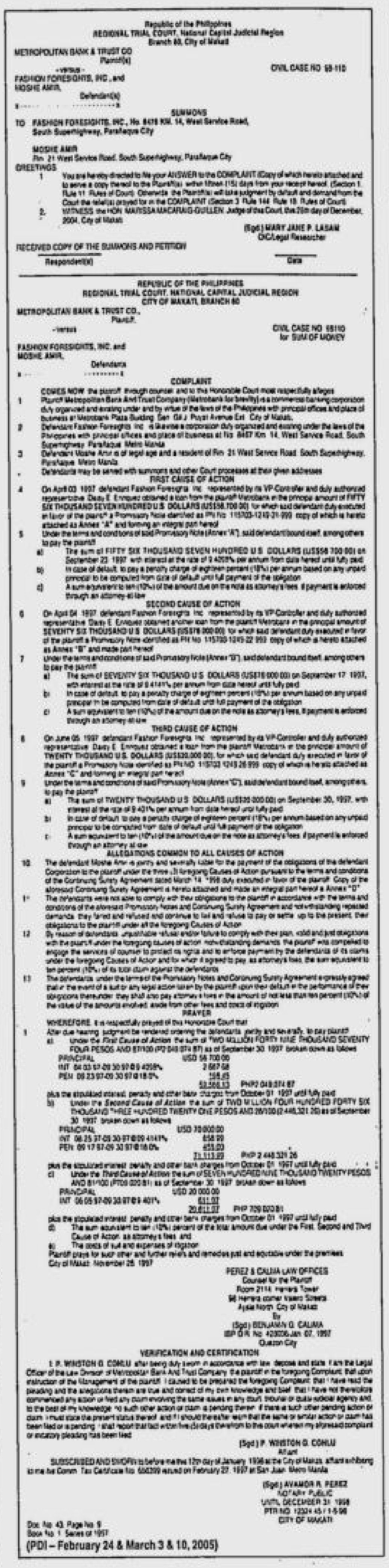
2. Male, can speak Korean language. At least 5 years experience related with the manufacturing recycled wear and other textile products.
3. Can work under pressure.
4. Has valid and renewable Korean visa.

Applicants may send their resumé together with their valid passport to:

Atty. Severo C. Pastor, Jr.
Bldg. 255 Barry Road SBFZ, 2222



Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, National Capital Judicial Region
Branch 60, City of Makati

METROPOLITAN BANK & TRUST CO
Plaintiff(s)
-versus-
FASHION FORESIGHTS, INC., and MOSHE AMIR,
Defendant(s)

CIVIL CASE NO 98-110

SUMMONS

TO FASHION FORESIGHTS, INC., No. 8475 KM. 14, West Service Road, South Superhighway, Parañaque City

MOSHE AMIR
Rm. 21 West Service Road, South Superhighway, Parañaque City

GREETINGS:

(Sgd.) MARY JANE P. LASAM
OIC/Legal Researcher

RECEIVED COPY OF THE SUMMONS AND PETITION

Respondent(s) Date

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT, NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
CITY OF MAKATI, BRANCH 60

METROPOLITAN BANK & TRUST CO.,
Plaintiff,
-versus-
FASHION FORESIGHTS, INC. and MOSHE AMIR,
Defendants

CIVIL CASE NO 98110
for SUM OF MONEY

COMPLAINT

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

ALLEGATIONS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

PRAYER

VERIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION

(PDI – February 24 & March 3 & 10, 2005)

I, RAJ SINGH S/O MALKIT SINGH R/O LADHAI KE TEHSIL BAGHAPURANA (MOGA) HAVE CHANGED NAME OF MY MINOR DAUGHTER MANPREET KAUR SIDHU TO **MANPRIT KAUR SIDHU.**

FOR SALE (AS IS WHERE IS)

DAY SPA EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE
(GOOD CONDITION)
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loc. 3105/3110
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C70 A/T MOTORCYCLE
CONTACT: Marie or Manny 818-3601

PSALM POWER SECTOR ASSETS & LIABILITIES MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR THE INVESTOR PRELIMINARY ASSET REVIEW PROCESS WITH RESPECT TO THE GENERATION ASSETS OF THE NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation ("*PSALM*") invites interested parties to register their interest for the Investor Preliminary Asset Review Process with respect to the generation assets (the "*Assets*") of the National Power Corporation which are to be privatized in accordance with Republic Act 9136, otherwise known as the "Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001". PSALM shall allow preliminary asset review through access to the Data Room and site visits for interested parties who submit a written expression of interest ("*EOI*") and execute a Confidentiality Agreement and Undertaking, both in the form provided by PSALM. The preliminary asset review for any particular power plant shall terminate upon the commencement of formal due diligence on that power plant, which shall be announced through the publication of an Invitation to Bid.

The EOI must contain the full company name, address, telephone and fax numbers, e-mail address and the name of the principal contact of the interested party and the particular Asset/s which such interested party is interested in. The EOI must be submitted at the following address:

Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation
Attention: Raphael P. M. Lotilla, President
2nd Floor, SGV II Building Ayala Avenue
Makati City, Philippines 1200

Interested parties shall pay PSALM a non-refundable fee for access to the Data Room (the "*Access Fee*") in the amount of Five Hundred U.S. Dollars (US$ 500) for data on one to two power plants, and One Thousand U.S. dollars (US$1,000) for data on three or more power plants. Requests for site visits are subject to a separate fee (the "*Site Visit Fee*") in the amount of One Thousand U.S. dollars (US$1,000) per plant per visit. The fees may be paid in cash, manager's check, or cashier's check.

PSALM reserves the right to restrict access to the Data Room and site visits for any reason, including the commencement of the sale process for specific Asset/s. PSALM shall issue rules and procedures to govern the preliminary asset review process.

Clarifications and inquiries may be directed to:

Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation
Attention: Froilan A. Tampinco, Vice-President - Asset Valuation and Disposal
2nd Floor, SGV II Building Ayala Avenue
Makati City, Philippines 1200
Telephone (632) 893-8202; Fax (632) 840-5341
e-mail address : fatampinco@psalm.gov.ph

This public notice does not constitute a solicitation of bids for any aspect of the privatization of the Assets. It does not start the sale process of any of the Assets, nor does it purport to be a call for such sale process. Invitations to bid for the Assets will be published in due course.

VINCENT S. PEREZ, JR.
Secretary of Energy

Chairman, Privatization Bidding and Awards Committee

March 2005

(PDI--March 3, 2004)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATED OFFER

The Development Bank of the Philippines will entertain offers on a First-Come, First-Served basis at the Asset Management Department, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties:

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	MINIMUM SELLING PRICE
REAL ESTATE **MANILA**			
CWB-001	M.V. delos Santos St., (Near Univ. of Manila) Sampaloc	443.10 m² residential/ commercial lot (TCT No. T-264424) with 4-storey dormitory bldg.	P26,533,700.00
AM-CP-023a *AM-CP-023b* *AM-CP-023c*	Andora St., cor. Jackson St., Vista Verde North Subd., Caloocan City	Residential lots: 276 m² TCT No. C-348039 190 m² TCT No. C-348031 190 m² TCT No. C-348033	 P 727,260.00 P 468,350.00 P 468,350.00
BATAAN			
AM-CP-024	Sta. Monica Homes, Sitio Wiswis Camaya, Mariveles	2 adjoining vacant residential lots (TCT Nos. 229478 & 229479) total area of 100 m²	P 251,300.00
BATANGAS			
AM-CP-025	Lot 11, Blk. 3 Transville Homes Subd., Banay-Banay, Lipa City	60 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-141654) with bldg. & imp.	P 331,500.00
BULACAN			
AM-CP-026	Brgy. Santol, Balagtas, Bulacan	2 adjoining vacant agro-industrial lots (TCT Nos. 421182 M & 421183 M) total area of 31,400 m²	P15,063,000.00
CAVITE			
DSM-001	De Fuego, General Trias	3,614.50 m² residential-industrial lot (TCT No. T-1025488) with hospital bldg. Imp.	P61,581,200.00
LAGUNA			
AM-CP-027	Lot 20 Blk. 5, Villa Consolacion, Brgy. San Vicente, San Pedro	79 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-536560) with bldg. & imp.	P 360,600.00
AM-CP-028	Lot 26 Blk. 5, San Carlos Village, Brgy. Banay-Banay, Cabuyao	50 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-536563) with bldg. & imp.	P 225,100.00
AM-CP-029	Lot 11 Blk 11, St. Joseph Village, Phase 6, Butong, Cabuyao	40 m² residential lot (TCT No. T-584456) with bldg. & imp.	P 200,000.00
RIZAL			
AM-JA-030	C. Lawis Ext., Brgy. San Luis, Antipolo	1,377 m² industrial-residential lot (TCT No. R-14327) with factory-office bldg. & imp.	P10,014,700.00
CHATTELS (sale on per item/set and "as-is, where-is" basis)			
CWB-29	Bldg. 693 Gridley St., SRF Compound, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Olongapo City	Various machinery and equipment for food processing (1-Fully Automatic Convection Conveyor Oven, 1-Automatic Turbo Dryer Convection Blower, 4-Universal Food Cooker, 2-Universal Mixing/ Seasoning Machines, 2-High Pressure Boilers, 1-Meat Rolling Machine, 1-Canning Seaming Machine, 1-Meat Slicer Machine, 4-Automatic Sealing Machines, 10-Basins Fabricated, 4-Active Stacking Tripods-High Grade, 6-Active Stacking Tripods, 10-Manual Sealing Machines)	P 7,700.00 to P 4,820,000.00

Forms for negotiated offers may be obtained from AMD-Acquired Assets.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 892-1566/893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2218/2252 for Code starting with AM; 926-8216 and 920-4909 for Code starting with CWB and (046) 416-1390 or 818-9511 local 1427 for Code starting with DSM.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI – March 3, 2005)

John Maxwell's 'Developing The Leader Within You™ workshop'

NETWORK TWENTYONE, Inc. Philippines held another of its powerful interactive workshops developed by renowned author, John C. Maxwell, Developing The Leader Within You™. These 12 powerful sessions in 2 remarkable days were attended by professionals and business owners from leading industries. "I picked-up loads of new concepts from the training. I saw what it takes to be a true leader and if I have the potential to be one. I also learned that the way I live my life affects not only me, but also the people whom I work and live with. A great course for established leaders and aspiring ones as well," says Erwin Cabbab, Executive Development Analyst, PLDT. "The workshop is a timely approach today for all people involved in giving goal settings and performance evaluations in all fields of endeavor. The topics are comprehensive and contain practical tools for making a truly effective leader," states Reynaldo Reyes, Director, Asia Partnership, Inc. Philippines. "Being nominated to be the leader is quite common. Functioning as an effective leader is always the challenge. The class has certainly been an eye-opener for me ... giving me bite-size pointers of what it takes to be a real leader coupled with lessons learned from the experiences and views of the other participants. So my leadership journey continues...this time I know I am better equipped," Jose Mina, Senior Product Consultant, Fidelity Information Services. To register, or for more information on Developing The Leader Within You™, contact Baby at 4330021 / 4343678 ext. 104 and 107, or email corp.training_rp@n21.com.

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Philippines MCPO Box 2102 Tel. No 893-6001/1320

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC - Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

2005 ANNUAL RENTAL CONTRACTS FOR BIDDING OF VARIOUS EQUIPMENT FOR SOUTHERN NEGROS GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD EDC05-028

The Approved Budget is P52,495,400.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 1 year. The ceiling rates shall be based on the prevailing ACEL guidebook.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o I.M. Corcuera) starting **February 24, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Two Hundred (P200.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **March 17, 2005, 10:00 a.m.**, at the Admin Complex, PNOC-EDC SNGPF, Ticala, Valencia, Negros Oriental. Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, not later than 2:00 p.m. of March 29, 2005 and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC - EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC - EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--Mar 3, 2005)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR of 2230 M. Roxas St. Sta Ana Manila Auction Sale on March 11, 2005. Fri. at 2:30 in the afternoon Respectively. Oct. 12 - Nov. 11, 2004 SONS of J. LANUZA, Auctioneer. (PDI - March 3, 2005)

MARA PAWNSHOP
I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City.
AUCTION SALE on Mar. 11, 2005, Fri. at 10:30, 11:00, 12:30, 1:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon, Respectively Oct. 11 - Nov. 11, 2004.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer
(PDI - March 3, 2005)

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE TIMOTEO V. FORONDA WAS EXTRAJUDICIALLY SETTLED AMONG HIS HEIR AS PER DOC. NO. 81; PAGE NO. 12; BOOK NO. LXXII; SERIES OF 2005 UNDER NOTARY PUBLIC ATTY. ERNESTO L. MENDOZA. (PDI FEB 17,24 & MAR. 3, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region 01
San Juan, La Union

Tel. No.: (072)242-59-09 & (072)700-25-79
Web site: www.nfa.gov.ph
E-mail Address: nfa-region1@sflu.com
Fax No.: (072) 242-59-07 & (072) 242-59-08

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID FOR HANDLING SERVICES

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested Handling Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Unloading Services of 2005 NFA imported/local rice at the different NFA/Leased Warehouses in Region I, to wit:

Province/Destination/Warehouses	Approved Volume (in bags of 50 kg) for Transfer Within the Region	Approved Budget for the Contract (Rate per bag of 50kg (P) x Total Volume)
1. NFA GID Warehouse, San Juan/ Staging Warehouse, La Union	1,860,000	5,580,000.00
2. NFA Loakan/NFA Kadiwa Warehouse Baguio City	280,000	840,000.00
3. NFA GID Warehouse, Abra	22,000	66,000.00
4. NFA GID Warehouse, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte	60,000	180,000.00
5. NFA GID Warehouse, Bantay, Ilocos Sur	105,000	315,000.00
6. NFA GID Warehouse, Binalonan/ NFA Rosales Warehouse, Rosales,Pangasinan	165,000	495,000.00
7. NFA GID Alaminos/ NFA GID Warehouse, Mangatarem, Pangasinan	228,000	684,000.00

Interested Handling Contractors may bid on any or all warehouse-destinations.

The Schedule of Bidding activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	DATE
1. Advertisement First Publication Second Publication	 February 24, 2005 March 3, 2005
2. Issuance of Application and List of Eligibility Requirements, Bidding Documents	February 28-March 9, 2005 (8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)
3. Pre-Bidding Conference	March 10, 2005 (1:00 p.m.)
4. Issuance of Minutes of Pre-Bidding Conference	March 13, 2005
5. Deadline for the Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals (Opening of Bids will follow immediately)	March 22, 2005 (1:00 p.m.)

The application forms, eligibility requirements and other bid documents shall obtained from the RBAC Secretariat after payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in the amount of P5,000.00.

A single stage bidding will be adopted using a simple pass/fail criteria for the evaluation. The prospective bidders shall submit simultaneously three (3) envelopes, one containing the eligibility requirements and two(2) envelopes containing bidding documents. Contents of each of the bid envelopes are specified in the Instructions to Bidders.

Eligibility criteria includes among others that the value of the prospective bidders largest contract within the last three (3) years, adjusted to current prices, completed within the period and similar to the contract to be bid must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

THE NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITIES OR DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS OR TO AWARD TO ANY CONTRACTOR WHOSE BID IS CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NFA AND /OR TO THE GOVERNMENT.

For further inquiries, please contact the RBAC Chairman Ruben S. Rimando or RBAC Secretariat Ms. Gloria Daclan at the Regional Office 01, San Juan, La Union or at Tel. Nos. (072) 242-59-09 or (072) 700-25-79.

(Sgd.) **RUBEN S. RIMANDO, CESO VI**
Assistant Regional Manager
RBAC Chairman

(PDI–Feb. 24 & March 3, 2005)

INVITATION TO BID
JANITORIAL SERVICES FOR MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANY

SUBMIT YOUR BID PROPOSALS & PERTINENT DOCUMENTS NOT LATER THAN MARCH 15, 2005 TO THE AWARDS AND BIDDING COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX No. 17644, SAN JUAN, M.M.

ATTENTION

Mr ALBINO RODRIGUEZ of Block 6 Lot 5, a member-beneficiary of Bonanza Phase IV Dwellers Association are subject for substitution due to default in payment as per NHMFC Guidelines and as amended by the Board of Directors.

MR. JAIME C. MANLANGIT
President Bonanza IV Dwellers Assn
PDI-Feb. 24 & March 3, 2005.

FOR SALE

VARIOUS APPLIANCES (defective)
(Split type aircon, washing machine, range, stove)
Lot Price: P43,580.00

VARIOUS MACHINERY & EQUIPMENTS AND SCRAP METALS
Lot Price: P1,661,000.00

VARIOUS FURNITURES (2nd Hand)
(Round Tables, Sala Set, Office Table, etc.)
Lot Price P20,950.00

For Inquiries, please call:
Asset Management & Disposition Division
Tel Nos.: 811-9797

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Tel. Nos. 522-00-00; 526-01-00 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or (b) 60% Filipino owned partnerships/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-043	80 units UPS, 6KVA	P 9,600,000.00	LBP Funds
	60 units AVR, 2KVA	300,000.00	
	150 units Modems	2,250,000.00	
	100 units Sharing Devices	2,400,000.00	
	75 units Ethernet Switch	1,200,000.00	
	80 rolls Ethernet Cable Cat-5	200,000.00	
2005-046	20 units MICR Reader	P 5,000,000.00	LBP Funds
	2 units MICR Encoder	440,000.00	

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on March 30, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 and P1,000.00 for ITB Nos. 2005-043 and 2005-046, respectively.

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on March 10, 2005 at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI – February 24 & March 3, 2005)

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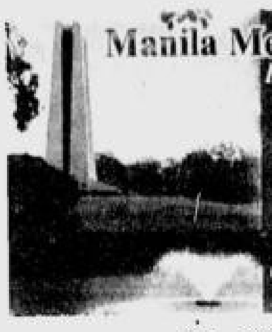

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LEON HOLAZO TIANSAY

Passed away in the Grace of the Lord
on 1 March 2005

He is survived by his children: **Susan Dolly** and **Jojo, Marisa** and **Ishmail, Bobby** and **Gay, Cali, Manny** and **Jessica, Maritel** and **Tiny**; sisters **Trining** and **Tita**, grandchildren **Stevie, Gay** and **Jason, Marijo** and **Lawrence, Carlo, Justine, Alexis, Richo, Diana, Peter, Wali, Lovely, Jaz** and **Miggy**; great grandchildren, **Abbey, CJ, Gabby** and **Kevin**; nieces **Andee** and **Lestee**; nephews, **Boboy, Mark** and **Peter** and companion, **Estella**.

His wife, **Beatriz**, passed away on 6 May, 1986. His daughter, **Babette**, passed away on 29 May 2003.

His remains lie in state at 2340 Guijo Street, United Hills Village, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be held on Saturday, 5 March 2005, at 11:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park Crematory, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Jorge Fortunado

April 23, 1908 – March 2, 2005

Peacefully joined his Creator and his wife Consolacion Gurango

His loving children,
Romy & Ana
Panny (†) & Nell,
Ester & Felix,
Rodolfo & Ely,
Edmund & Sonia,

grandchildren, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence in Infanta, Quezon.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 5, 2005.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith." 2 Timothy 4:7

Man of passion, artist and salt of the earth, Daddy lives on in the truest and best part of ourselves.

Ricardo Clemente Bonoan

17 November 1935 — 28 February 2005

Devoted husband of Tita, beloved father of Reret, Mikie and Jane, Sugar, and Joy, dearest son of Antonio (†) and Vicenta, and loving brother of Toñing and Baby, Gerry and Tita

His family and friends request your prayers for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine, New Manila.

Mass will be celebrated daily at 6:00 P.M.

Requiem mass is on Saturday, March 5, 2005, at 9:30 A.M., with cremation to follow at 11 A.M at Funeraria Paz, QC.

PAULINA ESCOBER BENUSA

of Barugo, Leyte and Newark, New Jersey, U.S.A.

was called home to the Lord
on February 23, 2005 at the age of 83.

She shall be missed by her dearest children: **Benilda & Boyet** (†), **Allan & Elvira, Cesar** and **Juliet, Edwin,** and **Gil**; grandchildren: **Patrick Joseph, Ronald Allan, Cherrubin, Allan Anthony, Edgar Allan, Maria Cerlita, Cesar, Jr., Marian Joan, Jennifer, Carlstin, Jasper** and relatives.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on March 5, 2005 at the Serenity Memorial Park after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

DEATH NOTICES

AVELINO H. CAYAS

of Cavite City

Peacefully joined his Creator
on February 25, 2005 at the age of 70.

His remains lie in state at his residence in Caridad, Cavite City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 5, 2005 at Himlayang Caviteno .

DR. TOMAS V. SARANGAY

of Cabagan, Isabela

Passed away last Feb. 25, 2005
in Toronto, Canada.

His remains will arrive on March 7, 2005 and will lie in state until March 9, 2005 at the St. Therese Chapel, St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish Center, Magallanes, Makati City after which his body will be flown to Cabagan, Isabela.

Interment will be on March 12, 2005.

CONRADA REYES PUNONGBAYAN

12 February 1910 – 01 March 2005
Turo, Bocaue, Bulacan and Taytay, Rizal

Widow of the late

FELICISIMO M. PUNONGBAYAN (†)

Her bereaved children and grandchildren

Benjamin and **Evelyn Tolentino**
Jay & Apple, and **Michelle**

Bonifacio and **Zenaida Eballa**
Liezl

Araceli and **Dejarmi Dalapit**
Ronald and **Charyl**

Rodolfo and **Teresita Barnachea**
Cristina, Christopher and **Gerald**

Lamberto (†) and Luisa de Guzman
Lourdes, Teresa and **Emmanuel**

Efren

Ester

Irma

great-grandson, **Nicolas**, and relatives and friends will appreciate prayers for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at the Christ the King Church, Green Meadows Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 6 March 2005 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Christ the King.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."

Rosie Meamo Estorninos

widow of the late **Manuel J. Estorninos**

Peacefully joined her Creator
on March 2, 2005 at the age of 78.

Her bereaved children **Rolly & Linda, Estoy & Cynch, Nelia, Elvie, Mira & Pabs Jaime**; grandchildren **Ruby Ann, Irwin, Andrew, Princh, Klarise, Jeo, Memek** and **Jap**; great grandchildren **Bryn, Jed, Reese** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Jacinto Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment at the Manila Memorial Park will be announced later.

"In
peace
I shall
both lie
down
and
sleep
for You
alone
Lord
make me
secure."
(Psalm 4:9)

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ANG SIOK TUAN LIM

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on February 16, 2005 wish to convey our sincerest and heartfelt gratitude to all those who offered masses and prayers, sent flowers and notes of sympathy, extended support, visited and kept vigil, attended the services and funeral rites, and those who in countless ways condoled, helped and comforted us in the hours of our deepest sorrow.

God Bless You All

BUSINESS

3 projects eye Bataan ecozone

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SOME P610 million in new investments are expected to go to the Bataan Technology Park Inc., including ventures engaged in cigarette production, motorcycle and vehicle assembly and medical facility.

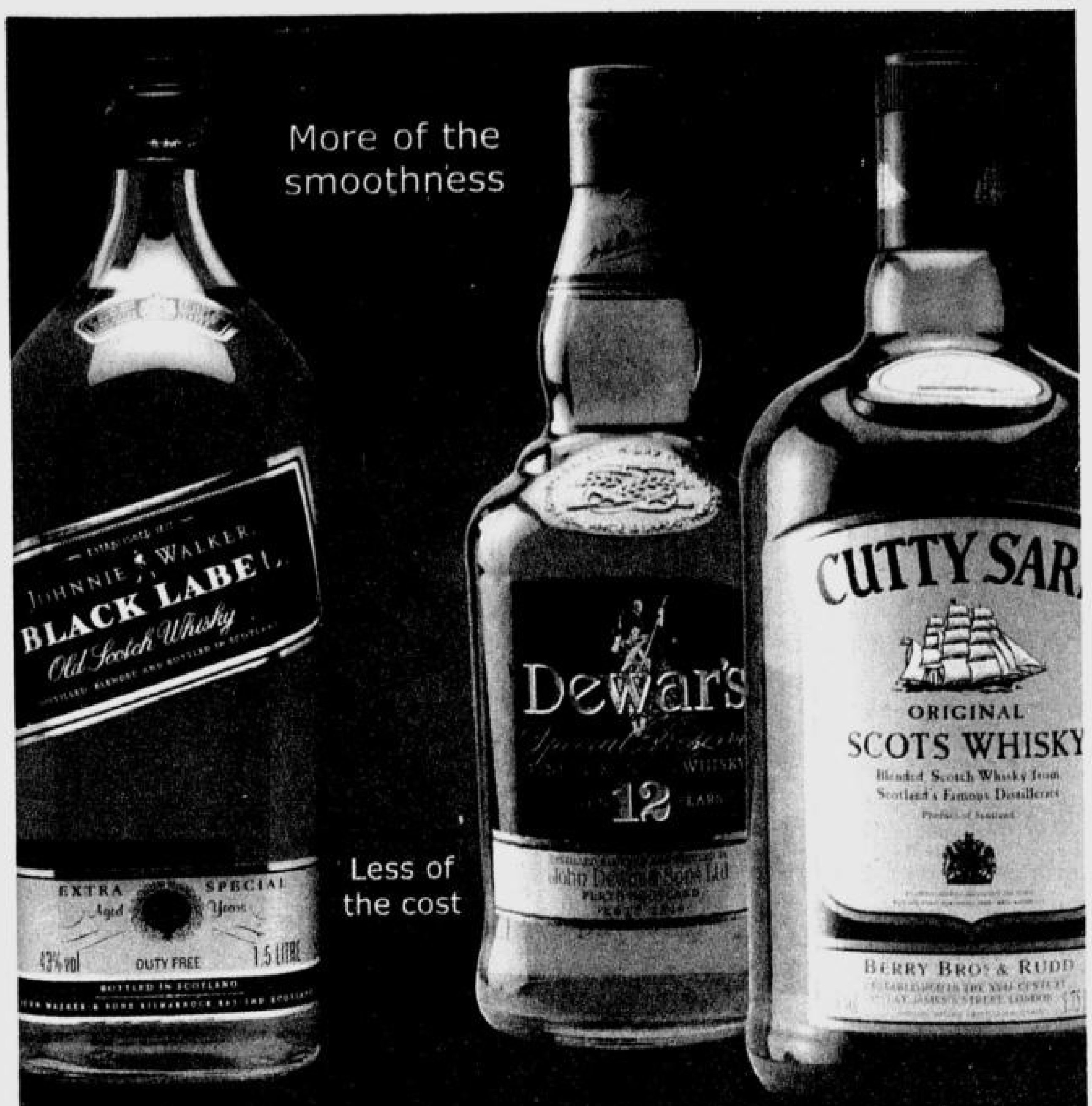
BTPI president and chief executive Ofelia V. Bulaong told reporters that an Iraqi firm, Amir Co., was laying out at least $7 million or about P382 million in a medical facility and jewelry factory.

Amir Co. owner Amir Al Atia, who is based in Michigan in the United States, is putting up a $6-million, 100-bed facility that would offer among others services in cosmetic surgery and spa amenities.

The businessman would also establish a $1-million facility for the production of export-quality jewelry.

Another anticipated venture is tobacco firm Star Steyr Enterprises' P200-million cigarette factory at the economic zone.

A third project is the P28.75-million motorcycle and vehicle assembly project of local firm Granstar Motor and Industrial Corp.



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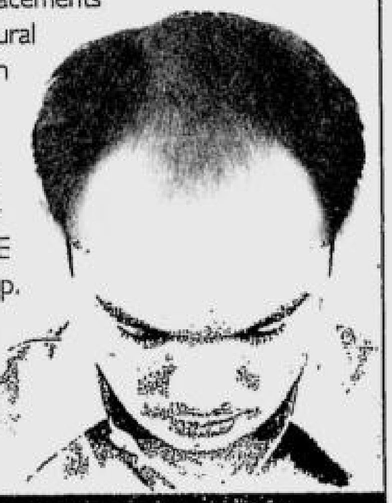

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VENTING consumer gripes on air /C4

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

At chef Ed's pleasure

CHEF ENCISA—the man behind the super makis

His masterpieces make up the funky repertoire at the Japanese restaurant Omakaze in Libis

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

PICKING a place to eat is tricky, especially if you're in search of a good Japanese restaurant. There are as many bad ones as good ones, and those that boast of excellence come with a chunky price tag to match.

In Libis, there's a little Japanese restaurant called Omakaze that takes pride in serving traditional and fusion dishes. Omakaze, literally translated, means "at the chef's pleasure," which is perhaps the best way to describe chef Ed Encisa's creations.

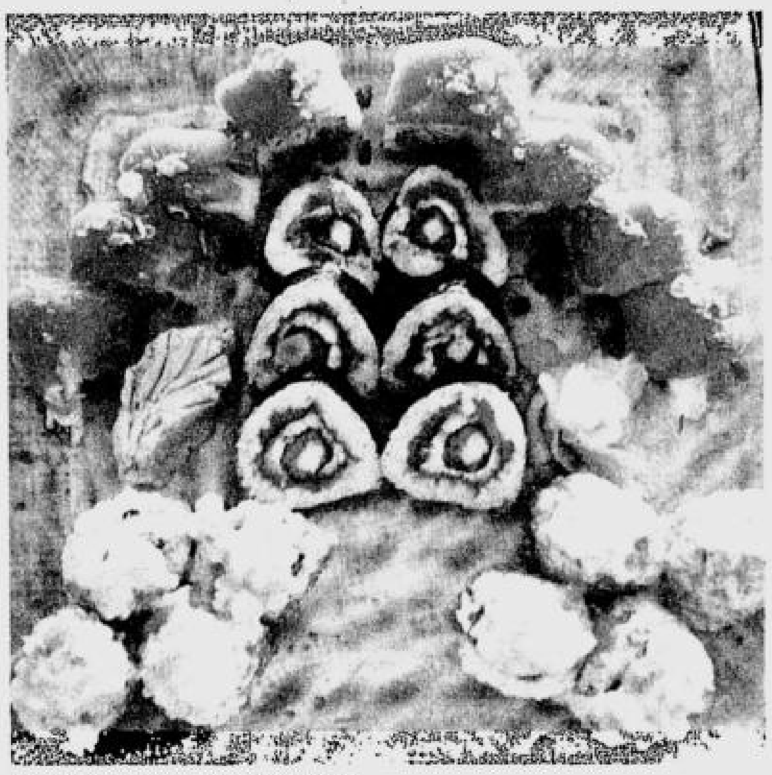
Chef Ed's skills were honed under Japanese chefs James Tanabe and Itoshi Izumi, his mentors at the famed Furusato Restaurant (still one of my favorites) where he worked for over nine years. From Furusato, chefs Ed and Izumi opened You Japanese Restaurant (now known as Enraku along Pasay Road).

Talent and hard work took chef Ed to some of the most exotic kitchens of the world, to Middle East and later, along with his brother, Andy, also an experienced sushi chef, to Bermuda. It was during his stint at the Primavera restaurant in Bermuda that his creativity was put to the test. Tourists who frequented the place asked for hipper variations on the traditional sushi theme, with a Western touch to boot. So the fusion of East and West began and the rest is history.

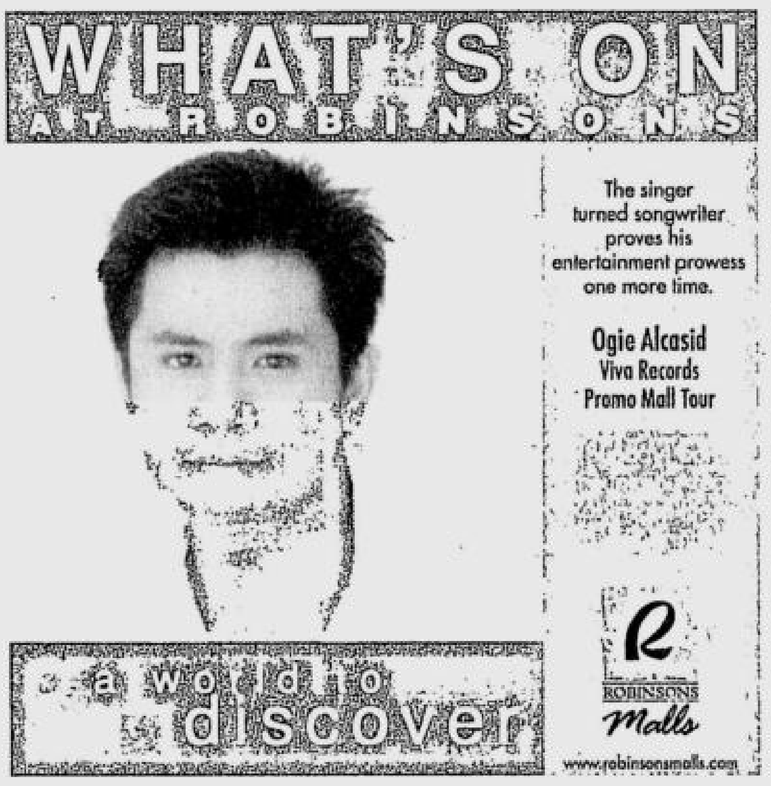
Today chef Ed's funky repertoire includes masterpieces that range from the Jurassic (Maki of *ebi* tempura, *kani*, *ebiko*, salmon skin and *unagi*) and the American Dream (Deep Fried Sushi with salmon, *kani* and cream cheese), to Spider Maki (shell crab), M2 Rolls (*unagi*, *kani*, cooked salmon *maki*), Uni Tempura, Tofu Steak, all the way to the Dynamite (unagi, tempura, spicy scallop maki)! Oh, and these are just my favorites. As far as his menu is concerned, there remains much to be discovered.

Cooking is a collective expression of one-

AT CHEF/ C4



A DELICIOUS canvas of sushi art



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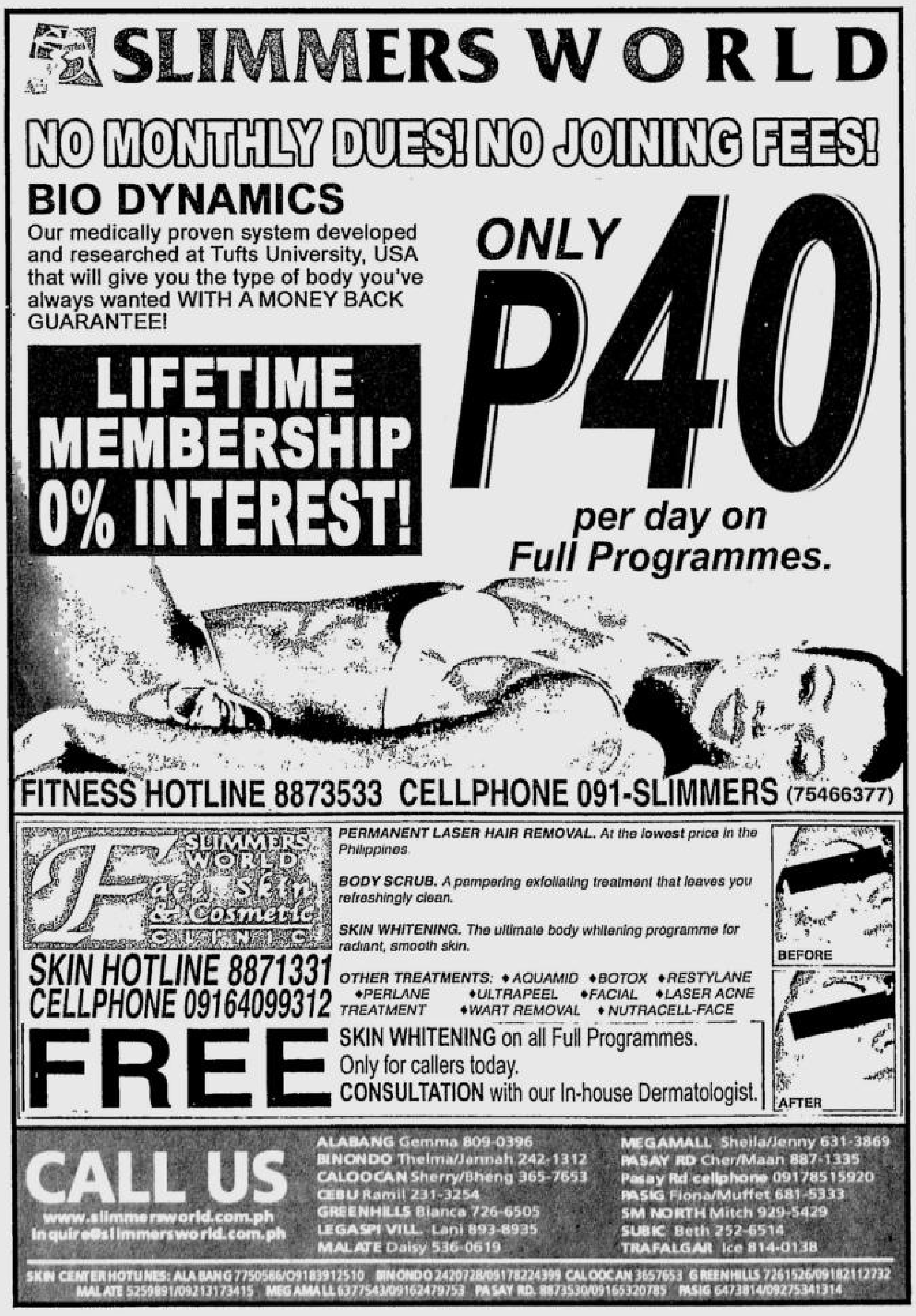

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Sylvia Reynoso-Gala
GOLD MEDALIST Academia de Gastronomas Madrid, Spain - 1964

ERNEST REYNOSO GALA
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

Leni Reynoso-Araullo
CERTIFIED WILTON METHOD SCHOOL INSTRUCTOR, Chicago, U.S.A.
Masters in Cake Decorating, Wilton School, Chicago, U.S.A., 1974 under Martha & Stanley Wilton
Graduate : Chicago School of Cooking and Catering
Graduate : Full Course, Thai Cooking School at the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok
Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

LEARN AND EARN! PRACTICAL, EASY, EXACT RECIPES

MAR 3 THU - 2:30 - 6:00PM - OPEN A COZY KOREAN RESTAURANT. LEARN TO MAKE THESE KOREAN SPECIALTIES: KIMCHI; SPINACH SALAD; MIXED RICE W/ KOREAN BEEF, BEAN SPROUTS; KOREAN PORK BARBECUE; DEEP FRIED BEEF IN SKEWERS; CRAB & PORK FRIED RICE; KOREAN STYLE SOTANGHON, OJINGKO POKUM (SQUID IN HOT SAUCE); ROSE KUI: KOREAN BEEF STEW-TOPPED RICE. PLUS KITCHEN-TESTED BONUS RECIPES **P1,200. BY SYLVIA**

MAR 8 TUE - 2:30 - 5:30PM - 6 HOTSHOT CHICKEN RECIPES. TENDER ROAST MAGNOLIA CHICKEN W/ SAUSAGE-APPLE STUFFING, CRISPY CHICKEN ROLLS, CRUNCHY CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS W/ CREAMY GRAVY; BAKED NUT STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS; CHICKEN CROQUETTES W/ CHEESY SUCE,CHICKEN BREASTS W/ MUSHROOM GRAVY ON FRENCH BAKER'S WHOLE WHEAT BREAD
P1,200. BY ERNEST

MAR 9 WED - 2:00 - 6:30PM - MONEY-MAKING SAUSAGES COURSE 3. LEARN 7 OF YOUR FAVORITES: FOOTLONG HOTDOGS, BEEF SAUSAGE JERKY USING "VIPPI" CASING USED FOR HOTDOG-MAKING, WHOLE CORNED BEEF SERVED IN 5-STAR HOTELS & RESTAURANTS, PORK HAMONADO & BEEF DE RECADO, THE BEST PAMPANGO PORK TOCINO LONGANIZA LUCBAN
P1,200. BY LENI R. ARAULLO

MAR 10 THU - 2:30 - 6:00PM - SOFTEST DOUGHNUTS FOR BUSINESS! NO OVEN NOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDED. INCLUDES CHOCOLATE & MARBLED DOUGHNUTS W/ SEVERAL FILLINGS; ICINGS; DIPS. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF THICK SPANISH CHOCOLATE & CHURROS **P1,200. BY MORELLA**

MAR 11 FRI - 2:30 - 6:00PM - THE LATEST MONEY-MAKING HOTEL & BAKESHOP BESTSELLERS! CHOCO LAVA CAKES (CHOCO CENTERS WILL OOZE OUT). "TARTUFO" (ITALIAN DOME CHOCOLATE-COVERED ICE CREAM CAKE W/ CHOCO CAKE BASE-CAN BE FROZEN FOR A MONTH OR LONGER0; CREAM PUFFS W/ BAVARIAN & CHOCO FILLING W/ 2 GLAZES, THE YUMMIEST OF NEW YORK RESTAURANT SCHOOL CHEF INSTRUCTRESS LORRIE REYNOSO'S BAKED CHEESECAKE **P1,200. BY MORELLA**

MAR 12 SAT - 2:30 - 6:00PM - BEST SELLER OVEN BAKED CHICKEN PIES IN MUFFIN CUPS: FLAKY EMPANADA MELTS-IN-THE-MOUTH MAMON, MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER SLICES; PUTO PAO BONUS RECIPES OF MACAROONS; PUTO FLOUR UBE & TRI-COLORED PUTO.
P1,200. BY MORELLA

MAR 12 SAT - 1:00 - 5:00PM BAKING/CAKE DECORATING ON WILTON COMPUTER CAKES AT LIVING WELL HOMESTORE. 3RD FLOOR, THE PODIUM MALL (ACROSS DISCOVERY SUITES), ADB AVE., MANDALUYONG. P500, INCLUDES INGREDIENTS, SNACK, WILTON/LIVING WELL CERTIFICATE. BY CERTIFIED WILTON USA INSTRUCTOR LENI REYNOSO ARAULLO. PLS. BRING 3 PIPING BAGS; 3 COUPLERS; 1 STAR & 1 ROUND TIP (ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE STORE). PLS. CALL MR. ELY, 638-9590 TO RESERVE. (OR GOURDO'S, 887-4306; 887-0150) DEMONSTRATION - STUDENTS HANDS ON METHOD

MAR 14 MON - 2:30 - 6:00PM - ANG SARAP PANGNEGOSYO! 2 VERSIONS OF THE NEWEST, CHEWIEST CHOCO CRINKLES IN MANILA, GIANT MANGO MERINGUE WALNUT TORTE, CLASSIC AMERICAN APPLE PIE, FRENCH STREUSEL APPLE PIE
P1,200. BY MORELLA

MAR 15 TUE - 2:30 - 6:00PM - REYNOSO GALA & ARAULLO KAKANIN! MELTS-IN-THE-MOUTH SPECIAL RICE BIBINGKA; SAPIN-SAPIN ESPESYAL; DELICIOUS, EASY TO MAKE RICE SUMAN; HOMEMADE HOPIA W/ MONGO OR UBE FILLING. BONUS RECIPE: *APONG METYANG'S* CASSAVA CAKE
P1,500. BY MORELLA

MAR 16 WED - 2:00 - 6:30PM - NEW MONEY-MAKING BACON AND SAUSAGE 4. AMERICAN BACON, CANADIAN BACON, CHORIZO DE BILBAO, GERMAN WHITE FISH SAUSAGE, LONGANIZA ILONGGA. INCLUDES ACTUAL SMOKING METHOD BONUS : MORCILLAS (SPANISH BLOOD SAUSAGE).
P1,200. BY LENI R ARAULLO

MAR 17 THU 2:30 - 6:15PM - MULTI-LAYERED, FLAKIEST CROISSANTS, PUFF PASTRY MEAT FILLED TURNOVERS, ASSORTED GLAZED DANISH PASTRIES. P1,200. BY MORELLA

MAR 18 FRI - 2:30 - 6:00PM - BUSINESS BAKESHOP BEST SELLERS! BIG, UNIFORM-SIZED, FROZEN UP TO 6 MONTHS SYLVANA (MINI SANS RIVAL); BRAZO DE MERCEDES; CLASSIC CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE; MACAPUNO PANDAN CAKE W/ MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER ICING.
P1,200. BY MORELLA

MAR 19 SAT - 2:30 - 6:00PM - MONEY-MAKING FASTFOOD CART SPECIALTIES BY MORELLA. DELICIOUS CORNDOGS; WAFFLE W/ HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE/CARAMEL; NACHOS "TOPOTOS" W/ MONTEREY MEAT FILLING & CHEESE DIP; HOMEMADE SHAWARMA WRAP W/ BEEF FILLING & CHEESE DIP **P1,200.**

MAR 19 SAT - 1:00 - 5:00PM - BAKING/CAKE DECORATING "WILTON GRADUATION CAKES" BY CERTIFIED WILTON USA INSTRUCTOR LENI REYNOSO ARAULLO AT LIVING WELL HOMESTORE. 3RD FLOOR, THE PODIUM MALL (ACROSS DISCOVERY SUITES), ADB AVE., MANDALUYONG. P500, INCLUDES INGREDIENTS, SNACK, WILTON/LIVING WELL CERTIFICATE. PLS. BRING 3 PIPING BAGS; 3 COUPLERS, 1 STAR & 1 ROUND TIP (ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE STORE). PLS. CALL MR. ELY TO RESERVE - 638-9590 (OR GOURDO'S, 887-4306; 887-0150) DEMONSTRATION-STUDENTS HANDS ON METHOD.

MAR 21 MON - 2:00 - 6:00PM - NEW MONEY-MAKING SAUSAGE 5. ITALIAN SALAMI; PEPPERONI; LIVERWURST (GERMAN LIVER SAUSAGE); THAI HOT SAUCE; ILOCOS LONGGANIZA, BONUS: FRENCH GARLIC SAUSAGE **BY LENI R. ARAULLO (INCLUDES ACTUAL SMOKING METHOD). P1,200**

MAR 29 TUE; MAR 31 THU; APR 2 SAT & APR 4 MON 9:00AM - 5:00PM (4 LESSONS) MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING, P4,500. INCLUDES LUNCH, SNACK & INGREDIENTS, EXCEPT DECORATING MATERIALS LIKE PIPING BAGS, TIPS, ETC. AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE CULINARY STUDIO, OR BRING YOUR OWN).

LESSON 1 FLUFFY BUTTER CREAM ICING TECHNIQUES IN COLORING BORDERS, SHELL, ROPE, STAR, LEAF, ZIGZAG "E" MOTION, FLEUR DE LIS. MAKE GARLANDS & SWAGS, BASKET WEAVING, LATTICE DESIGN, 12 DIFF. DESIGNS FOR TOP & SIDES OF CAKE, DIRECT PIPING OF CAKE OR ROSE BOUQUET, SWEET PEA, CARNATION

LESSON 2 5 KINDS OF ICING INCLUDING MARSHMALLOW ROYAL TO MAKE SUGAR FLOWERS ON NAILS, TOOTHPICK & FLORAL WIRE. LEARN SUGAR MOLDING CAKES, FAN BOOTIES, BASKET CRIB, HEART, MARY'S HEAD THE LION KING, DVD MUSICAL DESIGN CAKE, 2 ADULT "SEXY" CAKES EACH STUDENT MUST BRING TRAY/BOX TO TAKE HOME CAKES

LESSON 3 MARZIPAN (FREE HAND) MOLDING & PAINTING OF FRUITS, FIGURES & VEGETABLES. LEARN THE MARZIPAN ROSE, FIGURE & FRUIT PIPING DECORATE DIFFERENT DESIGNS ON MUFFINS, FOR INDIVIDUAL SERVINGS, WHICH HOTELS & LUXURY LINERS SERVE

LESSON 4 HOW TO PREPARE DEBUTANTE/WEDDING CAKES, TIERED, STACKED, ETC. EACH STUDENT WILL DESIGN & DECORATE A WEDDING CAKE (STYRO) TO BRING HOME PLS BRING TRAY/BOX

MAR 30 WED; APR 1 FRI; APR 3 SUN (3 LESSONS) 9:00AM - 5:00PM FONDANT ICING & GUMPASTE FLOWERS COURSE. P3,500. INCLUDES INGREDIENTS, LUNCH & SNACKS.

LESSON 1 DAISY, TULIP, SAMPAGUITA, APPLE BLOSSOM & SWEET PEA. MAKE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LEAVES, STAMENS & CALYXES FOR FUTURE USE

LESSON 2 CAKE (STYRO) COVERED W/ FONDANT ICING & "CUT GLASS TECHNIQUE. MAKE GUMAMELA LILIES, STEPHANOTIS, CHRYSANTHEMUM, CARNATION, DAFFODIL WILTON ROSE, VICTORIA ROSE

LESSON 3 ORCHID, GUMPASTE RIBBONS & SWAGS, PREPARATION & DECORATION OF FONDANT WEDDING CAKE (FOR TAKE HOME) - **BY LENI R. ARAULLO**

APR 5, 12, 19 - CHILDREN'S COOKING & BAKING COURSE - THREE TUESDAYS - 2:30 - 5:30PM - P2,700 - INCLUDING INGREDIENTS. FOR CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 12 YEARS OLD. OVEN-BAKED CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS & POTATOES SHRIMP ALA KING IN MUFFIN CUPS PARTY FRUIT SALAD IN ICE CREAM CONES; CHEESE MACAROONS RAISIN WALNUT COOKIES; MEAT LOAF SUPREME, YUMMY SPARERIBS W/ COLESLAW SALAD; MAGNOLIA CHICKEN SPAGHETTI W/ MUSHROOMS, PHILADELPHIA CREAM CHEESE CHEWY BARS, TINY FRUIT CAKE BARS, CHOCO-PEANUTS IN PIE CRUST

THIS COURSE IS GIVEN ONLY ONCE-A-YEAR BY ERNEST & SYLVIA IN MANILA. CALL MORELLA FOR BAGUIO SCHEDULE. ONLY 30 STUDENTS WILL BE ACCOMMODATED. PAID RESERVATION IS A MUST. THANK YOU.

✓ VISIT OUR WEBSITES: http://uk.geocities.com/sylviareynosogala & www.sylviareynosogala.com
✓ WATCH OUT FOR MORE NEW COURSES THIS APRIL

ATTENTION! BAGUIO RESIDENTS

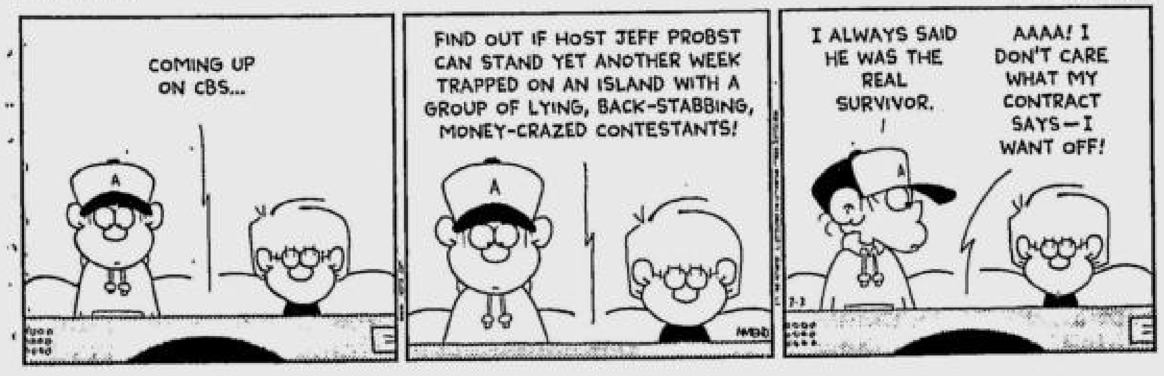
Morella Reynoso Gala
VALEDICTORIAN I.H.M.E.S. INTERNATIONAL HOTEL SCHOOL, UNITED KINGDOM -1992
STUDIED COOKING AT LE CORDON BLEU LONDON
OFFERS COOKING; BAKING; CAKE DECORATING & SAUSAGE MAKING
AT KHALDI'S CAFE BISTRO at #10 CARIñO ST., (ACROSS PALLADIN HOTEL, BAGUIO
PLS. CALL : WELLS, FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 12 NOON ONLY MONDAY TO FRIDAY (074) 444-8844
PLEASE SEE BAGUIO MIDLAND COURIER SUNDAYS FOR BAGUIO SCHEDULE
RESTAURANT OPENS 6:00 PM TO MIDNIGHT (EXCEPT SUNDAYS)

FRIDAY SATURDAY & SUNDAY CLASSES

Argentina CORNED BEEF · MEAT LOAF · LIVER SPREAD · VIENNA SAUSAGE
Century TUNA
Panasonic MICROWAVE OVENS & KITCHEN APPLIANCES
RICOA BREAKFAST COCOA
Gourdo's WILTON PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTOR
Magnolia Gold Pure & Creamy Butter
Magnolia FRESH CHICKEN
Hunt's · Hunt's · Hunt's Tomato Paste · Hunt's Sauce · Hunt's Ketchup
MONTEREY Quality Meats

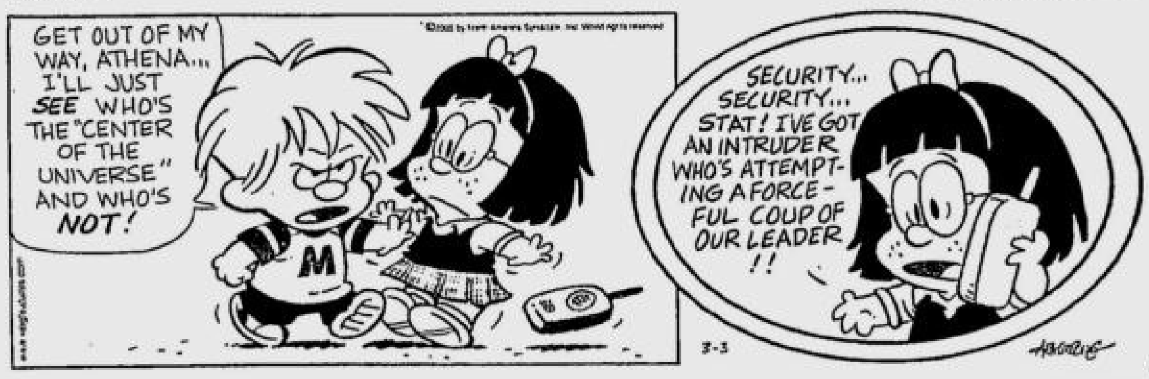
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


COMING UP ON CBS...
FIND OUT IF HOST JEFF PROBST CAN STAND YET ANOTHER WEEK TRAPPED ON AN ISLAND WITH A GROUP OF LYING, BACK-STABBING, MONEY-CRAZED CONTESTANTS!
I ALWAYS SAID HE WAS THE REAL SURVIVOR.
AAAA! I DON'T CARE WHAT MY CONTRACT SAYS—I WANT OFF!

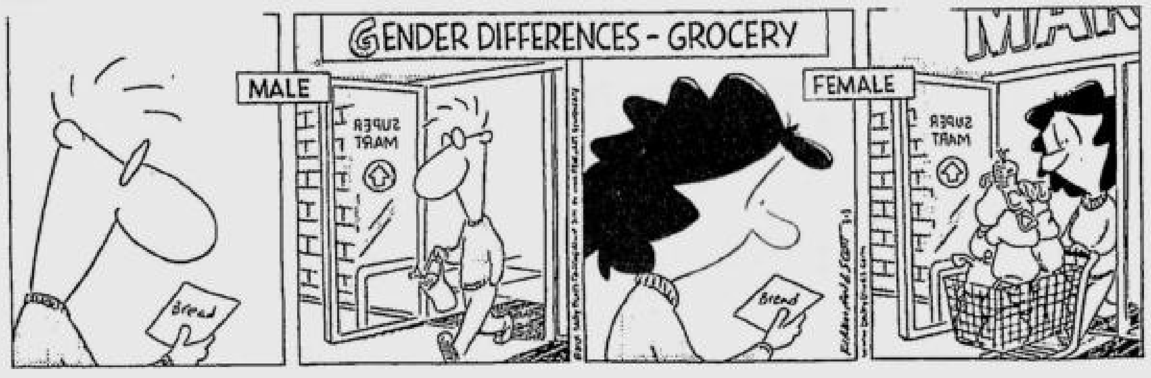
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


GET OUT OF MY WAY, ATHENA... I'LL JUST SEE WHO'S THE "CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE" AND WHO'S NOT!
SECURITY... SECURITY... STAT! I'VE GOT AN INTRUDER WHO'S ATTEMPTING A FORCEFUL COUP OF OUR LEADER !!
3-3

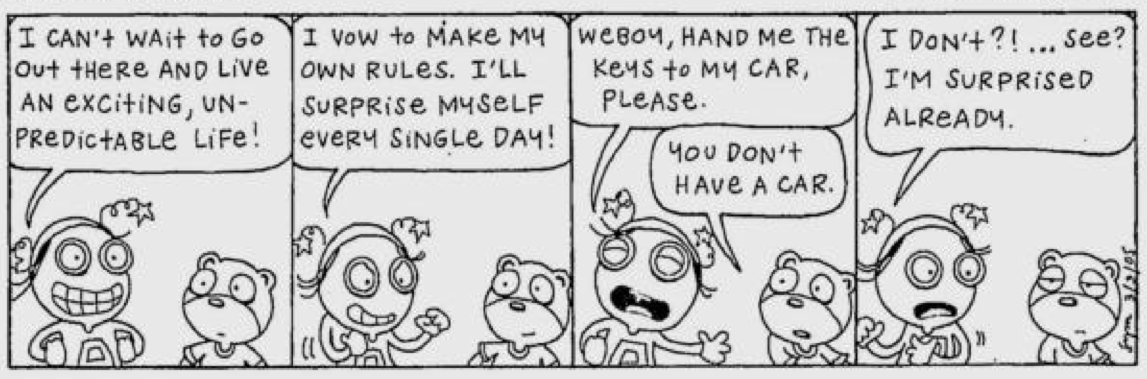
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


Bread
GENDER DIFFERENCES - GROCERY
MALE
SUPER MART
FEMALE
Bread

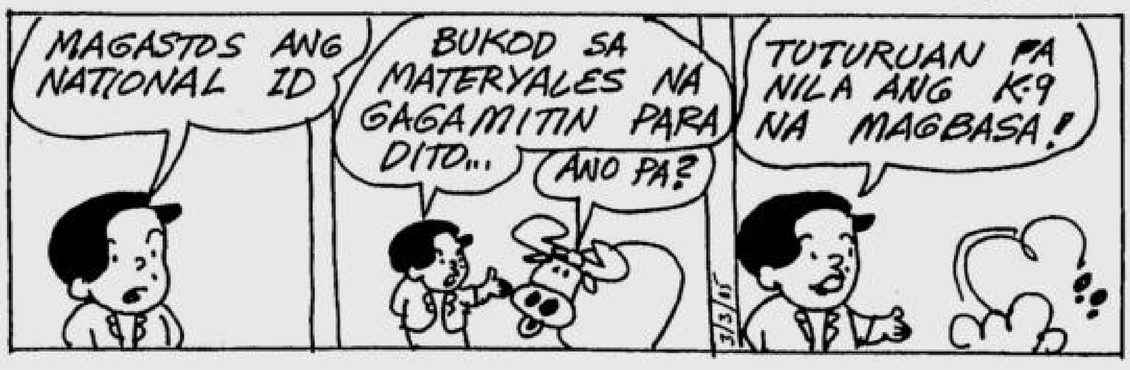
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I CAN'T WAIT TO GO OUT THERE AND LIVE AN EXCITING, UNPREDICTABLE LIFE!
I VOW TO MAKE MY OWN RULES. I'LL SURPRISE MYSELF EVERY SINGLE DAY!
WEBOY, HAND ME THE KEYS TO MY CAR, PLEASE.
YOU DON'T HAVE A CAR.
I DON'T?! ... SEE? I'M SURPRISED ALREADY.

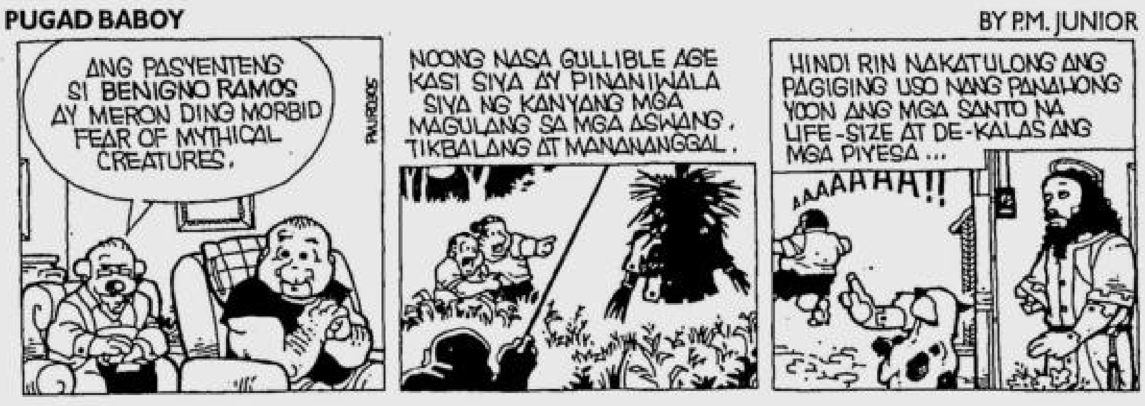
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAGASTOS ANG NATIONAL ID
BUKOD SA MATERYALES NA GAGAMITIN PARA DITO...
ANO PA?
TUTURUAN PA NILA ANG K-9 NA MAGBASA!
3/3/05

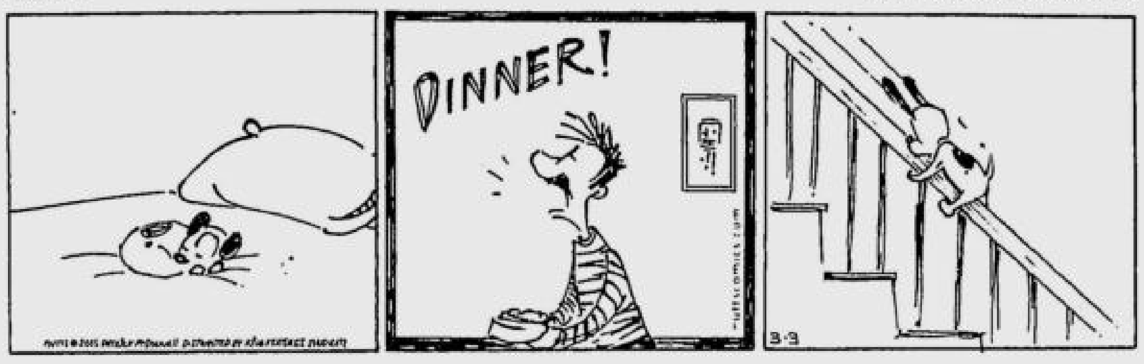
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG PASYENTENG SI BENIGNO RAMOS AY MERON DING MORBID FEAR OF MYTHICAL CREATURES.
NOONG NASA GULLIBLE AGE KASI SIYA AY PINANIWALA SIYA NG KANYANG MGA MAGULANG SA MGA ASWANG, TIKBALANG AT MANANANGGAL.
HINDI RIN NAKATULONG ANG PAGIGING USO NANG PANAHONG YOON ANG MGA SANTO NA LIFE-SIZE AT DE-KALAS ANG MGA PIYESA...
AAAAHHH!!

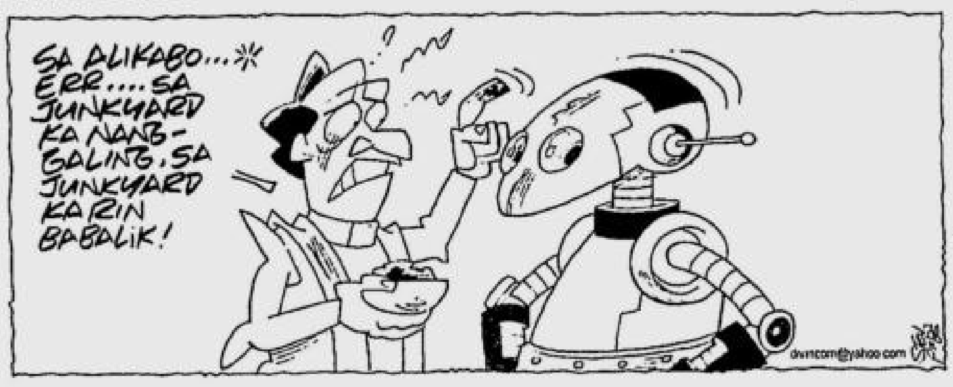
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



DIVINE COMEDY

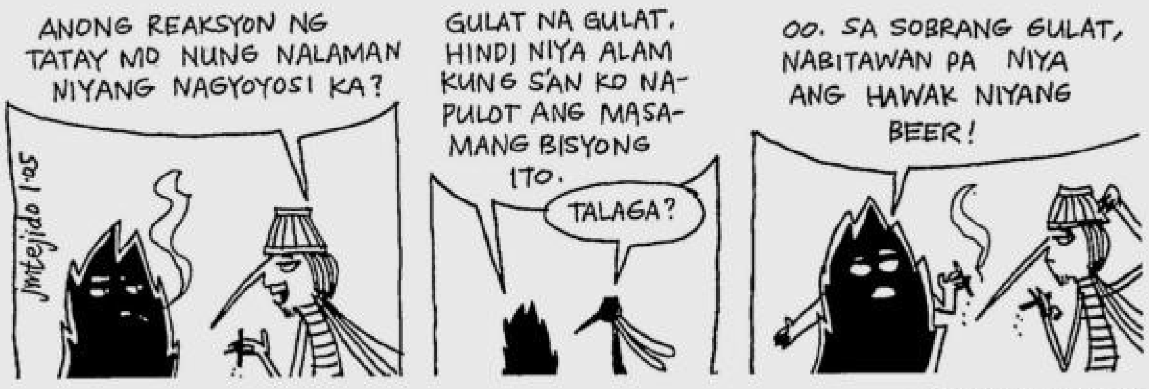
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SA ALIKABO... ERR.... SA JUNKYARD KA NANGGALING, SA JUNKYARD KA RIN BABALIK!
divincom@yahoo.com

A ROBOT'S ASH WEDNESDAY

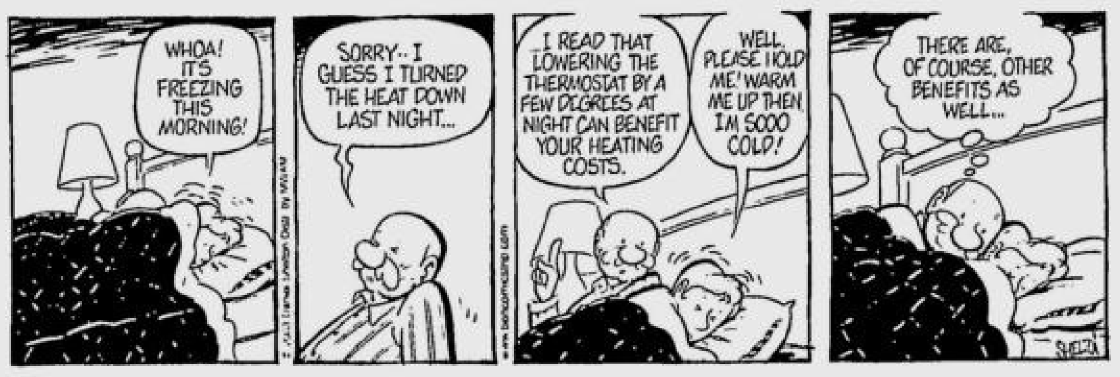
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANONG REAKSYON NG TATAY MO NUNG NALAMAN NIYANG NAGYOYOSI KA?
GULAT NA GULAT. HINDI NIYA ALAM KUNG S'AN KO NAPULOT ANG MASAMANG BISYONG ITO.
TALAGA?
OO. SA SOBRANG GULAT, NABITAWAN PA NIYA ANG HAWAK NIYANG BEER!
jmtejido 1·05

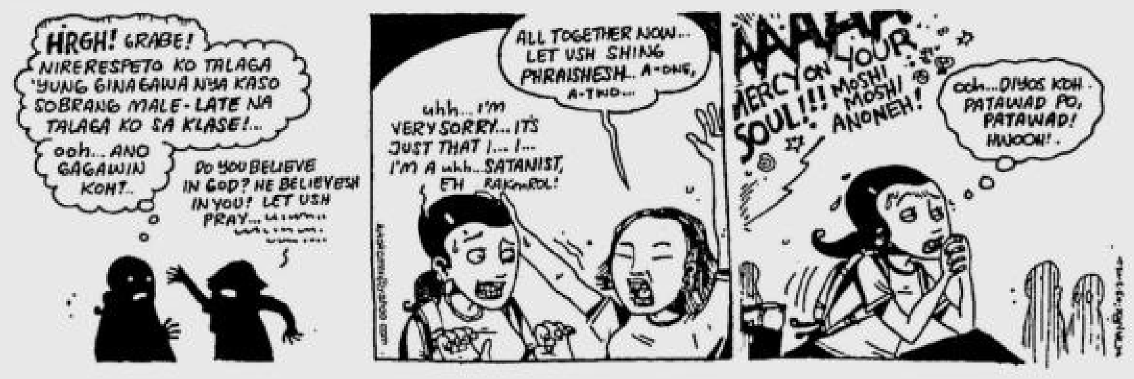
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHOA! IT'S FREEZING THIS MORNING!
SORRY.. I GUESS I TURNED THE HEAT DOWN LAST NIGHT...
I READ THAT LOWERING THE THERMOSTAT BY A FEW DEGREES AT NIGHT CAN BENEFIT YOUR HEATING COSTS.
WELL, PLEASE HOLD ME! WARM ME UP THEN, I'M SOOO COLD!
THERE ARE, OF COURSE, OTHER BENEFITS AS WELL...
SHELTON

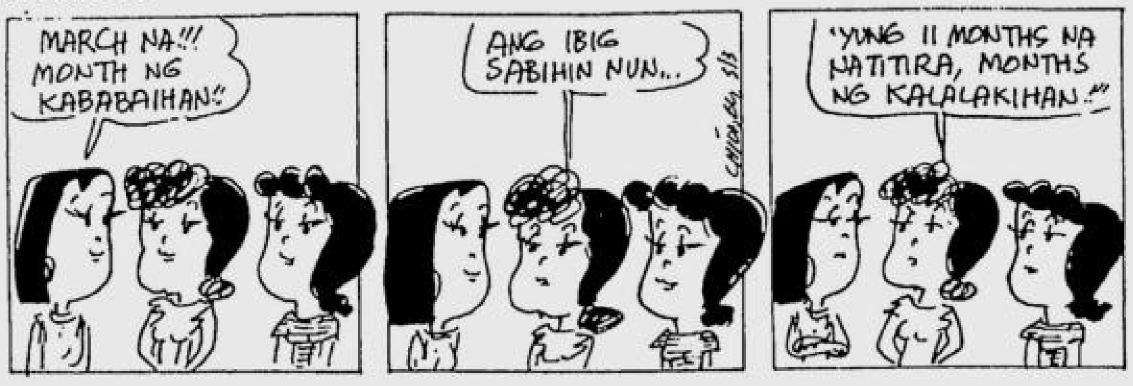
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HRGH! GRABE! NIRERESPETO KO TALAGA 'YUNG GINAGAWA NYA KASO SOBRANG MALE-LATE NA TALAGA KO SA KLASE!..
ooh... ANO GAGAWIN KOH?..
DO YOU BELIEVE IN GOD? HE BELIEVESH IN YOU! LET USH PRAY...
ALL TOGETHER NOW... LET USH SHING PHRAISHESH.. A-ONE, A-TWO...
uhh... I'M VERY SORRY... IT'S JUST THAT I... I... I'M A uhh.. SATANIST, EH RAKenROL!
AAAAHH! MERCY ON YOUR SOUL!!! MOSHI MOSHI ANONEH!
ooh... DIYOS KOH. PATAWAD PO, PATAWAD! HUOOH!

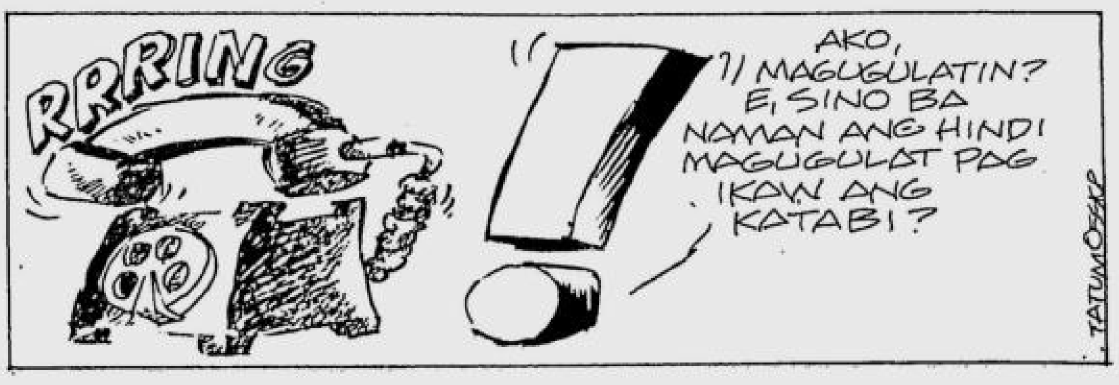
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MARCH NA!!! MONTH NG KABABAIHAN!!
ANG IBIG SABIHIN NUN...
'YUNG 11 MONTHS NA NATITIRA, MONTHS NG KALALAKIHAN!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


RRRING
AKO, MAGUGULATIN? E, SINO BA NAMAN ANG HINDI MAGUGULAT PAG IKAW ANG KATABI?
TATUMOSKP

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a natural storyteller. You have highly developed visual skills, plus you easily see the big picture conceptually speaking. You will always carefully plan ahead for any important activity. You value preparation (sometimes to the point of perfectionism). Work hard in the year ahead. It is a time of building and construction. (In 2006, change is likely.)

Birthdate of: James Doohan, actor; David Faustino, actor; Jessica Biel, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): A sudden religious revelation might come to you today. Or it might be insight into yourself or someone else. It will open your mind in a fresh way.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): A friend might surprise you today. Alternately, you might meet someone who is quite a character! Others are definitely the source of unexpected shenanigans.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Surprising news about a boss or someone important in your life catches you off-guard today. Unexpected good fortune might arrive.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You might receive a surprise gift from someone today—or it might be a favor or a perk or some kind of assistance that you did not expect. Be gracious and accept.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Something wonderful and delightful might happen between you and a partner—or between you and a stranger! All your dealings with others are subject to surprise and amazement today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your work routine will be interrupted today. Expect power outages or systems to crash! Be flexible in how you approach your day. It will not unfold as planned.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Surprise invitations to parties, artistic events, resorts and vacation places might come your way today. Some of you will encounter love at first sight. Parents must expect surprises with children.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Unexpected guests might arrive at your home. Possibly, family members will surprise you. Something that is unanticipated (but pleasant) affects your home and private life today.

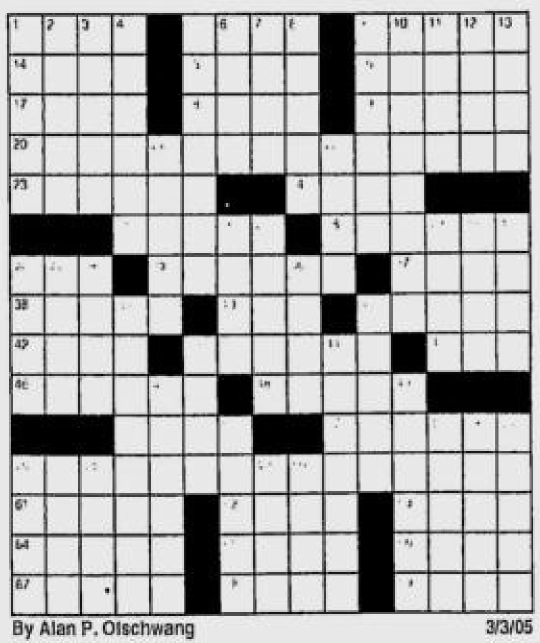
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a lovely, exciting day for you! Relations with siblings are pleasant, even surprisingly so. You might hear astonishing news from someone.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Money is the source of surprise for you today. You might spend it unexpectedly by purchasing something delightful. You might have an opportunity to earn more. Let's hope you don't lose it!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel restless, electric and very alive today! Your desire to have fun is so strong, you might tease someone or play a practical joke.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're feeling rebellious today. This could be due to some surprising news that catches you off-guard. A dear friend might surprise you with a gift or an unexpected appearance.

DAILY CROSSWORD



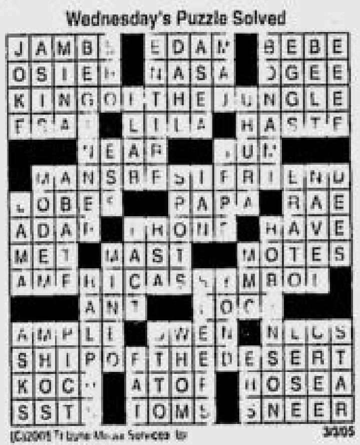
By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA

3/3/05

ACROSS
1 Clerical vestments
5 Granite block
9 Cast a shadow
14 Singer Falana
15 __ Alto, CA
16 Increased staff
17 Paid players
18 North Carolina university
19 Suspect's story
20 Start of Bertolt Brecht quote
23 Strengthen by tempering
24 Makes a lap
25 Proofreader's marks
28 New Orleans team
32 Part 2 of quote
35 Elicits
37 Flit
38 Catchall checkbox
40 Part 3 of quote
41 Cleveland suburb
42 Weaving machine
43 Lay down fresh tracks
45 Part 4 of quote
46 __ State Building
48 Ermine in summer
50 Six-shooters
52 Wistful
56 End of quote
61 Homeric epic
62 Part of U.A.E.
63 Tiny insect
64 "Divine Comedy" poet
65 Streamlet
66 Wolf modifier
67 Come in
68 Joint with a cap?
69 Work units

DOWN
1 First Greek letter
2 Actress Sophia
3 Mishandled
4 Pageant bands
5 Relieved
6 Tra followers
7 Baseball family name
8 Deep tolls
9 Type of daisy
10 Landscape slope
11 Operatic melody
12 Cotillion newbies
13 Correct proofs
21 Formula Western
22 Snake's warning
26 Use a diapason
27 Glasgow populace
29 __ a one
30 Family diagram
31 Sports fig.
32 Perforation
33 Bomb type
34 Mall unit
36 Coup d'_
39 Relocate abroad
41 Stubble
43 Big budget item
44 Fit for drinking
47 Steering mechanism
49 Get goosebumps
51 Greg Norman's nickname
53 Mexicali mister
54 Plucked sound
55 Politico Kefauver
56 Take cover
57 Distinctive flair
58 "__ Too Proud to Beg"
59 _ go bragh!
60 Bundled package

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



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3/3/05

STEAMED Chicken in Pandan

3 celebrity specials

PANCAKE House pays tribute to celebrities with its three special Star Meals.

Steamed or braised, the dishes come with special sauces and are delicately garnished. Each Star Meal is served with siding and rice, plus a glass of refreshing Nestea iced tea.

Steamed Chicken in Pandan (P180) consists of three pieces of steamed chicken meat with spicy radish filling and served with Java Rice.

Beef Sabrina (P170) is braised beef in mustard sauce, served with mixed vegetable siding and rice.

Home-style Bangus (P170) is steamed milkfish fillet stuffed with herbs and seasoned with special soy sauce. It comes with tomato garnish, finger chili and toasted garlic, and served with rice.

Visit any Pancake House outlet near you and savor our Star Meals.

BEEF Sabrina

Be a professional Japanese cook

MAYA Kitchen and Japanese Master Seiji Kamura brings you "Professional Japanese Cooking," 2-6 p.m., March 8-10.

Learn an array of Japanese recipes and get some culinary tips to help you create your own authentic Japanese feast. The class will cover rice dishes (Nishokudon Gomaku Zosui, Onigiri or curry rice); salads (Stick Salad Shoyoyu, Yakinasu, Horenso Goma-ae, Harusame); main dishes (Katsu Sand-Tonkatsu, Wafu, Spaghetti, Tofu Gratin, Shioiyaki, Oden, Shishamo, Agendashi Dofu); and soups (Yasai, Wakame, Tofu Misoshiro).

Learn "Lenten Specials" recipes 9 a.m.-1 p.m., March 5, including Bacalao a la Maya, Black Paella, Fish Sisig/Kinilao, Boneless Tinapang Bangus, Stuffed Squid and Spaghetti Negra.

Also scheduled for March 5, 1:30-5 p.m., is "Barchow (A Salute to the Graduates)," that will cover Chicken Feet, Buffalo Wings, Fried Hakaw, Chicken Tail, Spicy Gambas and Cucumber Kimchi.

A seminar on "Waitering and Bartending Basics" will be conducted 9 a.m.-4 p.m., March 5 and 12. It will include a step-by-step presentation of the basics of setup, suggestive selling techniques, serving and bussing out, napkin folding and skirting, classification of wine and spirits, types of glasses, mixing and serving of drinks.

Visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesday through Saturday), 8/F Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave., (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City, or call 8921185 or 8925011 loc 108. E-mail mkitchen@ultimate.info.com.ph.

Bass, pasta and Lenten treats

THE REGGIE Aspiras School Of Culinary Arts is offering the following classes:

March 4, Friday—Chilean Sea Bass (all new): Steamed with Hot Oil and Soy-flavored Sauce, Whole Bass in Salt Crust with Garlic Sauce, Rosemary- baked, Honey-glazed with Butter Sauce, Bass Kebabs, Sea Bass Curry, Whole Steamed Oriental Style

March 5, Saturday—Pasta 101-1: Carbonara, Vongole, Marinara, Bolognese, Primavera, Putanesca, Salmon and Caviar

March 9, Wednesday—Kobe Beef (all new)—Cook your own dinner: Skewered Foie Gras Gently Skewered and Basted with Teriyaki Sauce, and Tender Slices of Prized Kobe beef served with three sauces–Wasabi-soy, Miso and Garlic; bonus recipe: Kobe Beef Sukiyaki.

March 11 Friday—Lenten Treats (all new): Whole Snapper in Charred Herbs, Barbecued Gindara in Miso Marinade, Dome Grilled Salmon with Sweet Mustard Sauce, Bacalao Vizcaina, Broiled Grouper with Garlic and Chilies, Arroz con Atun. Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162, and 0917-8399888.

Catering seminar set

MB&G/ProActive is now accepting reservations for the Managing a Catering Business Seminar-Workshop, 1-5 p.m., March 14-18, Eastwood City, Libis, Quezon City.

Seminar fee is P5,000 per participant inclusive of manual and handouts, workshop materials and equipment, snacks, and certificate of completion.

The five-day training will feature lectures and hands-on workshops on planning the menu, equipment and staffing; cost control; and room arrangements, among others.

Call 6871787 or 0915-4315375 for registration.

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Unit 3 & 5 Bona Condominium, 545 EDSA, Cubao, Quezon City
Website: jetth2oheater.com
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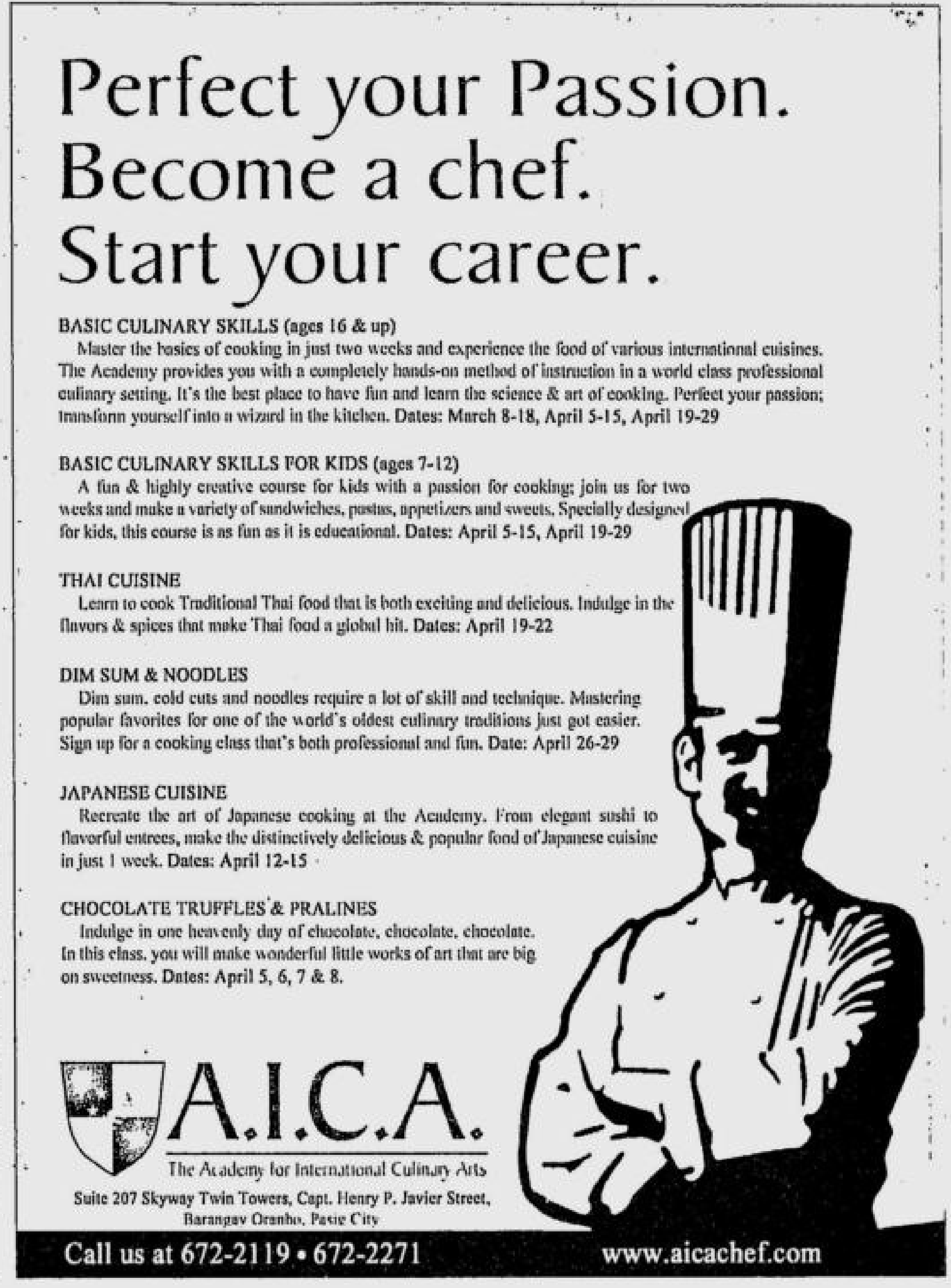


Perfect your Passion.
Become a chef.
Start your career.

BASIC CULINARY SKILLS (ages 16 & up)
Master the basics of cooking in just two weeks and experience the food of various international cuisines. The Academy provides you with a completely hands-on method of instruction in a world class professional culinary setting. It's the best place to have fun and learn the science & art of cooking. Perfect your passion; transform yourself into a wizard in the kitchen. Dates: March 8-18, April 5-15, April 19-29

BASIC CULINARY SKILLS FOR KIDS (ages 7-12)
A fun & highly creative course for kids with a passion for cooking; join us for two weeks and make a variety of sandwiches, pastas, appetizers and sweets. Specially designed for kids, this course is as fun as it is educational. Dates: April 5-15, April 19-29

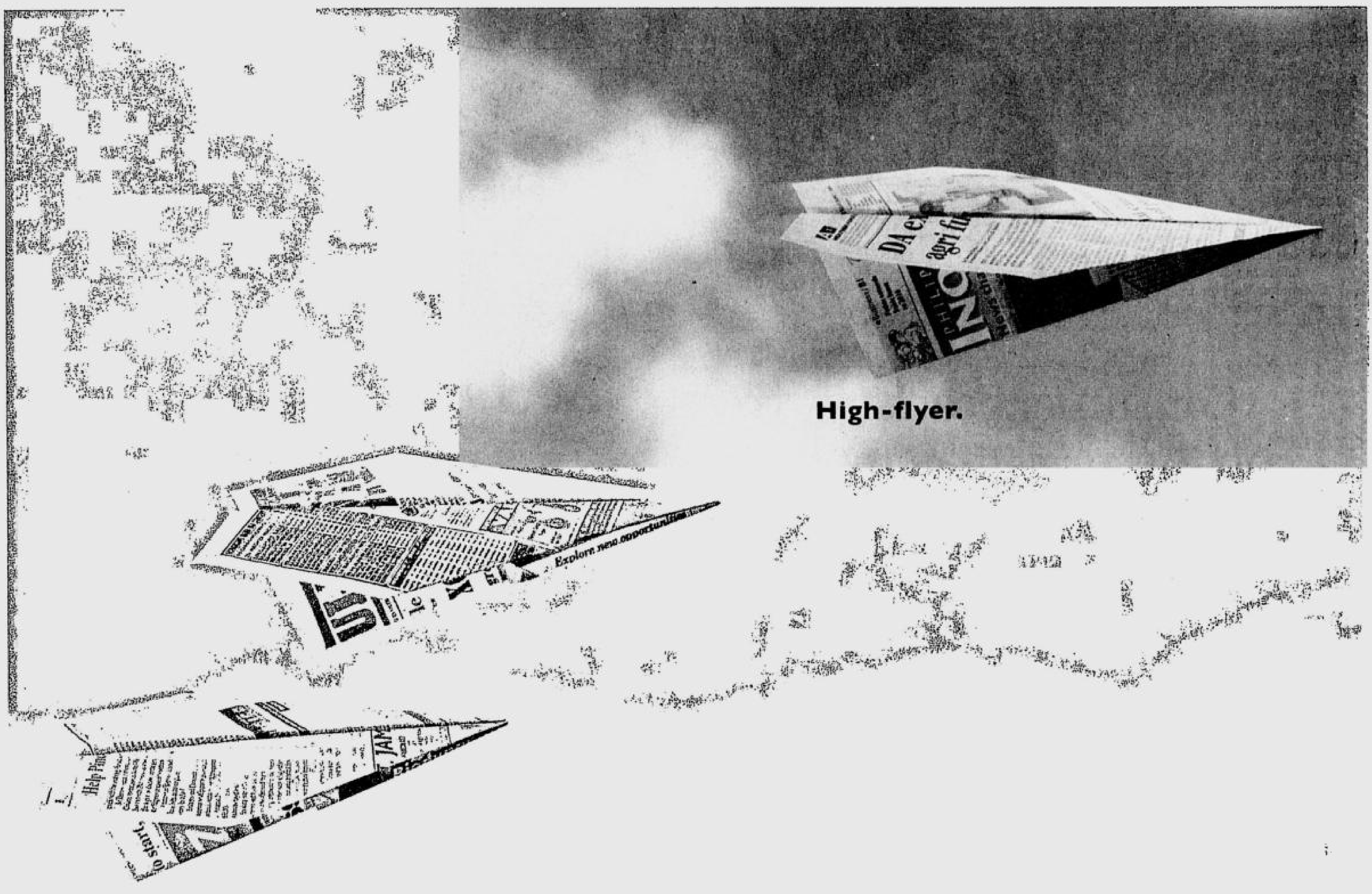
THAI CUISINE
Learn to cook Traditional Thai food that is both exciting and delicious. Indulge in the flavors & spices that make Thai food a global hit. Dates: April 19-22

DIM SUM & NOODLES
Dim sum, cold cuts and noodles require a lot of skill and technique. Mastering popular favorites for one of the world's oldest culinary traditions just got easier. Sign up for a cooking class that's both professional and fun. Date: April 26-29

JAPANESE CUISINE
Recreate the art of Japanese cooking at the Academy. From elegant sushi to flavorful entrees, make the distinctively delicious & popular food of Japanese cuisine in just 1 week. Dates: April 12-15

CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES & PRALINES
Indulge in one heavenly day of chocolate, chocolate, chocolate. In this class, you will make wonderful little works of art that are big on sweetness. Dates: April 5, 6, 7 & 8.

A.I.C.A.
The Academy for International Culinary Arts
Suite 207 Skyway Twin Towers, Capt. Henry P. Javier Street,
Barangay Oranbo, Pasig City
Call us at 672-2119 • 672-2271
www.aicachef.com



High-flyer.

For ten straight years now, Inquirer flies high in the readership surveys. Besting all other newspapers as the broadsheet most bought and read nationwide, according to the 2003 Nielsen Media Research Survey. We owe it to you - dear readers, advertisers and partners - for always keeping us at the top as we deliver nothing less than balanced news and fearless views.

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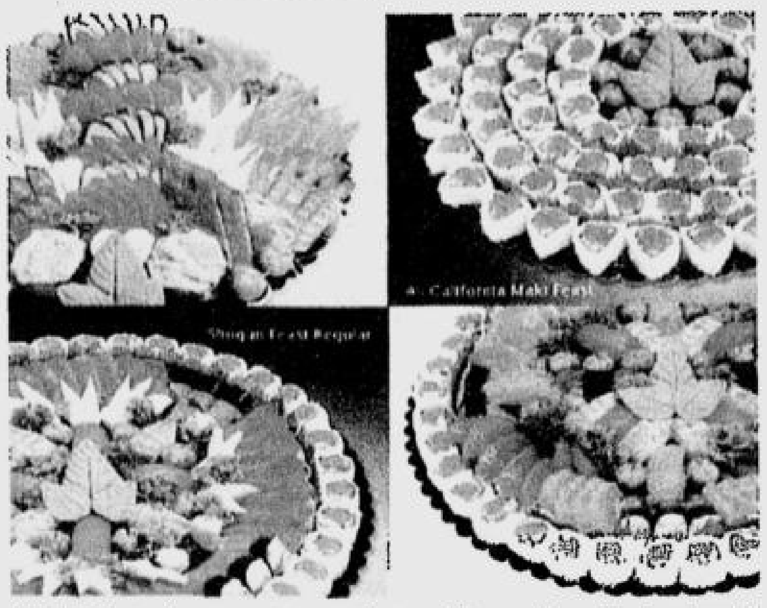
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

ALEX III Resto-Grille, the new name of the 20-year-old Alex III Restaurant, has been reinvented, its menu broadened. The restaurant has also adopted an al fresco ambience. Alex III Resto-Grille has branches along Wilson St. in Greenhills and Tomas Morato in Quezon City.



KITARO introduces party trays that combine sushi, sashimi and maki. The tray can have a minimum of 26 to a maximum of 104 pieces. Call 9111115. Kitaro has outlets in Walter Mart, Pasong Tamo; Robinson's Place Pioneer, East Avenue, QC; Manila Plaza, C.M. Recto Ave.; Bridgeway Food Court, Medical City, Tagaytay City; and Berkley Square, Tandang Sora, Commonwealth, QC.

Monday, Monday so good to poor kids

STARBUCKS Coffee Philippines has launched Marshmallow Mocha Mondays to help underprivileged children gain access to quality education.

Marshmallow Mocha Mondays, which runs until March 14, was initiated in support of project SparkHope, a corporate social responsibility (CSR) effort in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) Philippines.

Part of the proceeds of all Marshmallow Mocha sales on Mondays will be donated to project SparkHope. Launched in November, SparkHope aims to help children from poor barangays adopted by Starbucks stores gain access to early learning programs.

Programs range from improvement of existing child care centers or pre-schools to piloting supervised play groups and educating parents and caregivers, depending on a barangay's specific needs.

Early learning is a top priority of Unicef globally. In the Philippines, it is estimated that 66 out of every 100 young children are not enrolled in any form of early childhood education, and where one out of every five barangays, mostly in rural areas, has no early teaching programs.

Through SparkHope, both Starbucks and Unicef hope to improve the lives of these children one barangay at a time. So far, Starbucks has adopted nine underprivileged communities nationwide.

Each Starbucks store has a corner for SparkHope where customers will be continually updated on the progress of the beneficiary communities.

Scandinavian delights

MANDARIN Oriental Manila offers Scandinavia's homegrown specialties until tomorrow at Captain's Bar. The menu includes Danish Roast Meat Salad with red onions, Apple and Prune-filled Spareribs, Boiled Veal with pickles in aspic, Danish Chicken Fricassee with mushrooms, Fried Salmon with dill creamed potatoes, Finnish hot pot with assorted meats, Braised Cabbage Roll with ground beef and rice, Danish Chilled Rice and almond pudding and Finnish Raspberry Pudding. Call 7508888.

DINING OUT

THE COMIDA de Pastor Restaurant on the Verde Island Resort is both for indoor and al fresco dining serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner buffets. For a minimum of 30 guests, lunch and dinner menus include soup and salad, chicken, beef, pork, seafood, native pies, gelatin, *leche flan*, sweetened fruits, and cookies. Verde Island is located in Subukin, San Antonio, Isla Verde, Batangas City. Call 7500466 or 7500470.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Cake for March is Italian Dream Cappuccino Cake. This coffee-flavored sponge cake is mixed with the creamy kahlua drink. Available until March 31 at the Patisserie. Call 5261212.

MOCHA Blends, in observance of the Lenten Season, has lined up seafood specials.
Tuna Melt features spicy tuna filling with chopped cucumber, tomatoes, melted cheese on ciabatta bread. It is served with chips. Daing na Bangus meal features the all-time Pinoy favorite specially marinated with special spices. The Creamy Crab on Toast sandwich, which is served with chips, is filled with crab slices, cream cheese, yogurt and a selection of spices. All meals are served with a choice of Mocha Blends' Black Café Italiano or House Blend Iced Tea. Mocha Blends now has 34 branches in Metro Manila, northern and southern Luzon. Visit our web site www.mochablends.com

UCC COFFEE'S salad offerings include Beef Ga-Rikku Sarada and Kani Mango Sarada, Grilled Vegetable Teppanyaki and Japanese Seafood Salad. UCC Coffee shops are located at Tomas Morato, QC; Connecticut St., Greenhills; The Podium, Ortigas Center; Forbes Town Center, Taguig City; and The Paseo Center, Makati.

INTERCONTINENTAL Manila's Prince Albert Rotisserie presents Truffle Fantasies until March 12. Executive chef Richard Andrieux prepares Salad of Roasted Sea Scallop with Truffles and Sun-dried Tomatoes with Balsamic Jus; Pan-fried Duck Liver on Sautéed Mushrooms and Truffles, with Herb Salad with Raspberry Vinegar Sauce; Roasted Sea Bass with Fricasse of Vegetables with Creamy Truffle Sauce; Braised Salmon with Truffles served with Ragout of Mussels and Clams with Smoked Vegetables. Call 8159711.

Do you know why some traditional foods are gone?

THE FILIPINAS Heritage Library presents Vanishing Food, a one-day forum in honor of the scholarly and popular works on food and culture of the late Doreen Gamboa Fernandez, 8:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Aug. 27.

Food lovers, scholars, writers and anybody who is into food are invited to submit papers or make presentations on: Vanishing food and the environment—how foods are affected by changes in or mismanagement of the environment; the scarcity of local foods; vanishing family restaurants and why, how, when, etc.; vanishing cultural traditions related to food; history, archaeology and sociology of traditional foods; and nutrition

They can also write about other issues that they find interesting as long as they are related to the subject of the symposium.

Demonstrations, photo essays, musical performances and food tasting are encouraged.

The one-day forum hopes to find out what happened to foods from our childhood and our hometowns that are beginning to disappear, and restaurants and eateries, as well as comfort foods, that are no longer around. It will also discuss the effects of the environment on food, and the abundance or scarcity of food in these times.

The one-day lecture/presentation/performance cum exhibition is envisioned to be a lively, multimedia interactive symposium. Chosen presenters are encouraged to do more than just read their papers.

Presenters/lecturers must submit abstracts of their papers to the Filipinas Heritage Library by April 15. Prizes will be given to outstanding presentations. Cocktails will follow after the awarding of prizes.

The Filipinas Heritage Library is on Makati Avenue, Ayala Triangle (across the Peninsula Hotel), Makati City.

Consumers can now go on the air with complaints

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

AT LONG last, we consumers can now air our gripes—live at that—and also expect to get answers directly from consumer protection authorities through Radio DZMM.

The pilot episode of "Konsyumer Atbp." was launched Feb. 19 and hosted by Winnie Cordero and Trade Undersecretary Adrian Cristobal Jr.

But the one-hour program leaves much to be desired considering the many abuses suffered by consumers and the rampant violation of their rights and the consumer protection law. Also, the program only airs Saturdays.

From what we heard, last Saturday's episode got quite interesting that only one text message could be entertained and the phone patch segment with listeners had to be dropped.

Be that as it may, consumers can now look forward to another media outlet for ventilating their gripes and for learning more about their rights.

The program has four segments: "Bantay Bilihin" informs listeners on how the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is enforcing the fair trade law, specifically through the Consumer Protection Act, the Price Act and the Standards Law. Practical consumer tips on product safety are given.

"Consumer 101: School on Air" explains in layman's terms the highly technical aspects of product standards.

"Pinoy, Ang Galing Mo" features positive developments in the communities, industries and organizations. It also relates stories of successful Filipino entrepreneurs and local products that have passed government standards.

"Ugnayang Consumer" tackles complaints, highlighting the redress mechanism and cooperation between government and the private sector.

"'Konsyumer Atbp.' has been a long time coming," commented Peter Musñgi, ABS-CBN vice-president for radio. The first-of-its-kind radio program is a joint undertaking of ABS-CBN, DTI and the Philippine Product Safety and Quality Foundation.

Consumers can send queries or comments through SMS: text DZMM/space/text REACT/space/text question or comment, and send to 2366. To join the "Ugnayan Consumer" segment, call 9242615 or 9211998 (direct), or 4152272 (trunkline) and ask for "Konsyumer Atbp."

Complaints

An e-mail sender complained about violation of the No-Smoking ban at a seafood restaurant in Remedios, Malate. "We took it for granted, when we decided to dine in this restaurant, that the No-Smoking ban would be enforced in the air-conditioned establishment. "Well, we were wrong. We were bothered by the smoking of the other customers. When I called the attention of the waiter to the smoking customers, he just listened but did not do anything.

"If there is anybody out there who knows where we can call or send text messages about violators of the No-Smoking ban, please tell us (through this column)."

E-mail sender J. L. Domingo complained that Mario's on Tomas Morato does not give the senior citizen's discount privilege on Sundays.

Here again is that complaint about the outrageous discrepancy between a tag price and the price that the cashier's scanner reads. Information technology writer Danny Escasa writes:

"I shopped at Pioneer Center Grocery the other week. I selected an item with a price tag of P115. However, at the check-out counter, the scanned price that appeared on the cashier's monitor was P129.

"The cashier was polite when I raised a fuss, offering to cancel the transaction. But the point is, there is no excuse for the discrepancy. I went back a week later and found out that the price tag on the item was never changed. I didn't bother to check how it would be read by the cashier's scanner."

At chef Ed's pleasure

From page C1

self and that need to express is translated into works of art in the kitchen, the chef's creations even becoming masterpieces. Encisa's portfolio is no exception! The best part is, it's an indulgence one can afford without denting the pocket!

Once a hole in the wall by Green Meadows Avenue, Omakaze today is a restaurant that seats 80 at the Intrepid Plaza in Libis. Coming soon is a branch in Alabang. This is the sweet taste of success! I have my good friend, wonder pediatrician Aye Nuguid, to thank for introducing me to chef Ed's pleasures.

An added bonus is that they prepare beautifully arranged sushi trays on short notice over at Omakaze. Works wonders for those last-minute business meetings and parties. Yes, they deliver them, too! Delicious and terribly cheap! (Call Malou or Francis at 6376013 or 4370075)

I'm very happy with your article today because my husband and I enjoy steak and the timing is perfect since he is arriving from Taiwan this week and I would like to surprise him with homemade steak. Could you give me a recipe for gravy? It would be great help for me.

MRS. GIGI CHU, ROXAS CITY, CAPIZ

As promised and since you asked for it, gravy recipes coming up! Oh, Mrs. Chu, don't forget those killer high heels and your hot-pink lipstick when you cook this for Mr. Chu! And for those who want regular gravy like what is commonly served in "sizzling plate" restaurants, buy the gravy packets of McCormick. They'll save you time and money!

Onion Gravy

3 tbsp butter
3 tbsp flour
4 whole medium-sized onions, thinly sliced (or 2 c onions and 2 c mushrooms, sliced)
1/2 c beer
1/2 c beef broth, and a little more if you want gravy to be less thick
1 tbsp brown sauce (available in Santis), optional but more delicious with
Salt and pepper to taste

Melt butter in saucepan, add flour and whisk until combined. Add onions and cook until caramelized (golden in color). Add remaining ingredients and whisk until thick. Season to taste.

White Mushroom Gravy

2 tbsp olive oil
1/3 c onion, sliced
2 tbsp garlic, minced
½ tsp fresh rosemary
¼ tsp thyme leaves, crushed
2 c mushrooms, preferably fresh, thinly sliced
¼ c sherry (available in Santis or in liquor shops)
1 c heavy cream (Elle and Vire, President)
1 tbsp brown sauce (optional or if you want a dark-colored sauce)
1 tbsp onions powder
2 tsp garlic powder
2 tsp lime juice
2 tbsp parsley, chopped

Heat pan add olive oil. Saute onion and garlic. Add rosemary, thyme and mushrooms. Add sherry, reduce. Add cream, onion and garlic powder. Add cream and brown sauce, whisk until thick. Season to taste. Add lime juice and parsley.

Spanish Culinary Terms Part 4

Escabeche–marinade of garlic and vinegar
Estafadas–stews
Fabada–Asturian bean stew
Fideo–noodles
Frito–fried in oil
Gamba–prawn
Gazpacho–cold soup

For comments or suggestions, text 0917-8399888.